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Haske fired, appeal promised

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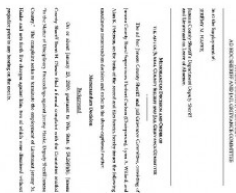
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June 03, 2010 12:00 am • By Peter Rebhahn, Star-Times

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Haske decision and order



The Juneau County Sheriff and Jail Committee fired sheriff's Lieutenant Jeremy Haske Tuesday—a decision that came nearly 22 months after his suspension with pay by Sheriff Brent Oleson Aug. 7, 2008.

In a 19-page decision dated June 1 and signed by all three members, the committee fired Haske effective with the date of his original suspension.

The committee determined that there was just cause to fire Haske for two of three charges against him—the charge that he engaged in a sexual relationship with a 17-year-old Mauston high school girl in 2000 and the charge that he

mishandled alleged sexual misconduct by a former undersheriff.

The committee determined that there was sufficient cause to demote Haske for a third charge—the allegation that he failed to report alleged misconduct by a former Sheriff's Department employee who disconnected telephone recording equipment the sheriff had ordered connected to her department phone.

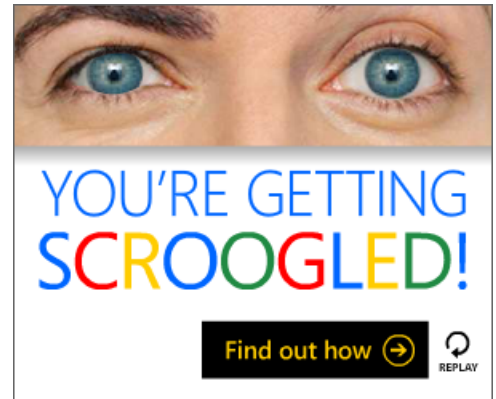
Haske denied all the charges and claimed that he was targeted for termination chiefly because Oleson believed Haske intended to challenge him for the elected post of sheriff.

Haske is represented by Medford attorney Shawn Paul, formerly Shawn Mutter, who recently resumed use of her maiden name following a divorce.

"I have no comment except to say that Lt. Haske will be appealing the committee's decision to the Circuit Court," Paul said Tuesday.

The committee's decision contained other bad news for Haske.

"Unfortunately, the committee is of the firm belief that Lieutenant Haske has lied under oath," the committee wrote. "Necessarily, the committee hereby makes the formal finding of fact that he has done so and, accordingly, shall refer the matter of his apparent perjury to the Juneau County



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district attorney for further review."

The committee also demanded that Haske repay the county for all salary and benefits he has received or accrued between the date of his suspension and Tuesday.

Haske earned an annual salary of about \$50,000. Benefits pushed his annual compensation over \$70,000.

Oleson is represented by Milwaukee attorney Michele Ford, who provided brief comment Tuesday.

"The sheriff's only regret is that the hearing should have been completed in less than three days based on the evidence the committee found important, and that Haske called so many witnesses who knew nothing about Haske's actual misconduct," Ford said.

Haske's grievance hearing before the committee played out over 12 days between Sept. 21, 2009 and March 31 this year.

The Sheriff and Jail Committee is an arm of the Juneau County Board of Supervisors. The committee members are Sup. Herb Carlson, who chairs the committee; Sup. Al Peterson, who is County Board chairman; and Sup. Lynn Willard.

The committee's legal adviser, county Corporation Counsel David Lasker, produced the written decision. But Lasker, who also presided over the grievance hearing in the role of administrative law judge, said the document also reflects the committee's work.

"The decision is the combined work of the committee and its legal counsel and is subscribed to unanimously by all three committee members," Lasker said.

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