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Sex assault trial begins for former St. George police chief

BY LEAH THORSEN • lthorsen@post-dispatch.com > 636-937-6249 STLtoday.com | Posted: Thursday, January 20, 2011 12:20 am | (11) Comments

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J.B. Forbes

9/11/07 Tuesday St. George St. George Police Chief Scott Uhrig in his patrol car. (File photo)

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HILLSBORO • The trial of the former St. George police chief on charges of sexually assaulting a teenage girl began Wednesday in circuit court.

Scott Uhrig, 46, of Imperial, was charged in December 2009 with second-degree statutory sodomy and sexual misconduct involving a child.

In his opening statement Wednesday, Jefferson County assistant prosecutor Travis Partney said Uhrig's behavior toward the girl grew increasingly bizarre as she developed physically, beginning when she was in the sixth grade.

Partney told the jury that Uhrig took naps with the girl and joined her in the shower.

Partney said that on July 1, 2008, Uhrig blackmailed the girl, then 15, into performing a sex act.

The girl told her stepmother of the incident, and the woman approached authorities in May 2009.

Uhrig's attorney, Daris Almond Jr. of Hillsboro, said in his opening statement that the girl had changed her story many times and that she had motives to lie.

Almond said he intends to call witnesses that will poke holes in the girl's stories and prove that Uhrig is innocent.

Testimony is scheduled to begin today.

At the time of the alleged sexual assault, Uhrig was police chief of St. George in south St. Louis County. St. George officials disbanded the department in January 2009 and contracted with St. Louis County for police protection. The municipality had a reputation as a speed trap, and the department made the news in 2007 when a motorist posted a video online showing a police sergeant threatening to arrest him on fictitious charges.

Uhrig has faced allegations of sexual misconduct before.

An administrative commission in 2002 upheld an accusation that Uhrig had propositioned a 17-year-old girl for sex during a traffic stop in 2000, when he was a police officer in Arnold.

A civil rights suit filed by the victim was resolved in private mediation.

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