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Former Norwalk police lieutenant sentenced to 30-day jail term

John Nickerson, Staff Writer

Published 09:49 p.m., Friday, September 3, 2010



Former Norwalk police lieutenant Thomas Cummings arrives at Superior Court in Stamford, on Thursday, Feb. 14, 2008. Cummings was sentenced to 30 days in jail on Friday. Staff Photo Chris Preovolos Photo: ST, File Photo / 00005793A



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STAMFORD -- Former police Lt. [Thomas Cummings](#) was sentenced to 30 days in jail Friday, closing a strange 33-month chapter in the veteran officer's life, which saw him go from being in the running for a deputy chief slot at the [Norwalk Police Department](#) and commanding its detective bureau to becoming a sentenced prisoner.

Wearing a light-pink shirt and khaki pants, Cummings, 48, read a statement thanking his attorneys and two teenage sons for sticking with him through an investigation and subsequent criminal charges alleging he had sex with two 15-year-old boys and tried to lure a third to his Norwalk apartment for sex.

After the state's sexual assault case against him fell apart, Cummings, who was facing 165 years in prison, agreed in June to plead guilty to misdemeanor charges of

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interfering with an investigation, coercion and reckless endangerment. The pleas were made under the Alford Doctrine, meaning he did not agree with all of the state's facts, but realized there might be enough evidence for a guilty verdict.

On Friday, Judge [Gary White](#) gave Cummings 10 days in jail for each of the three charges and suspended a yearlong sentence on each charge. Cummings was also given three years probation, during which he is forbidden to contact any of the boys and must continue treatment.

Because he was a police officer, Cummings' attorney, [Robert Frost](#), asked either he could be put into protective custody; White agreed. Cummings was transported to [Bridgeport Correctional Center](#), where he will remain for 15 to 25 days.

Prisoners can serve as little as 50 percent, or as much as 85 percent of their sentences.

State Department of Corrections spokesperson [Brian Garnett](#) said there are a number of protective custody units in the state that can keep Cummings safe.

Garnett would not speculate on how much time Cummings will spend behind bars, saying that those

decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.

Cummings quit the Police Department after his January 2008 arrest. He was accused of bringing two 15-year-old boys to his Dreamy Hollow condominium and having sex with them, as well as trying to lure a third minor to his home for sex sometime between late 2003 and summer 2005.

Just as jury selection was to begin in June, one of the young men determined he was 16 at the time he had sex with Cummings. A second witness told prosecutors he could not testify because of the effect it would have on his family.

As a result, Senior Assistant State's Attorney [Richard Colangelo](#) was left with just the third witness, now 21 years old, who told investigators Cummings attempted to give him rides to his home purportedly for sex.

Just before judicial marshals handcuffed him Friday, Cummings said that he wanted to "wholeheartedly" apologize to anyone who was hurt by what he did.

"I came here to answer for my actions," he said, adding that he was "deeply saddened" by the effects his arrest had on the Norwalk Police Department.

At the time of his arrest, police officer morale was shaken in Norwalk, and Chief [Harry Rilling](#) called it the "biggest scandal to ever hit the department."

Cummings also complimented how his sons withstood the "nightmare," saying they showed more honor than most men do during a lifetime.

He also criticized investigators who put together the original case against him.

As the investigators, Inspector [Gary Mecozzi](#) and [Phillip O'Grady](#), looked on while sitting in the



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back of the small courtroom, Cummings said their investigation contained mistakes and was neither fair nor thorough.

State's Attorney [David Cohen](#) came to Mecozzi and O'Grady's defense by saying that if Cummings wanted to push the point and go to trial, he had every opportunity.

"But when push came to shove, what did he do? He pleaded guilty," Cohen said. "I have 100 percent confidence in the integrity and ability of all the inspectors in this office, and if I didn't, they would no longer work here."

Outside the courtroom, Frost declined to comment, except to say that Cummings' statement spoke for itself.

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