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# Ex-park police chief allegedly molested as far back as 1962

Article by: [ROCHELLE OLSON](#) , Star Tribune      Updated: May 7, 2010 - 10:12 PM

A judge will decide if the 17 new allegations can be used at the trial of William Jacobs.

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From 1962 to 1980, former Minneapolis park police chief William Jacobs sexually assaulted 17 boys who recently came forward, according to allegations in a document filed Friday by a Hennepin County prosecutor.

The document details alleged incidents with boys whom Jacobs knew when he was a teacher, camp counselor or coach at YMCA Camp Warren in Eveleth, and at Blake and Breck schools in the Twin Cities. In the 12-page document, Assistant County Attorney Judy Johnston claims administrators at all three institutions knew about such allegations no later than the mid-1970s.

Jacobs, 66, of Deephaven, ran the park police from 1987 to 2001. He is scheduled to go on trial in October on a charge of first-degree criminal sexual conduct. He is accused of molesting a boy from 2007 until January, when the 15-year-old boy told authorities. He is free on \$500,000 bail.

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At a news conference Friday, reporters repeatedly asked County Attorney Mike Freeman how nearly 50 years of abuse could go unaddressed until 2010. "This was not society's finest hour," he said, adding, "The world was different in 1970."

Neither Jacobs nor his lawyer, Paul Engh, returned calls seeking a comment.

Last month, state Public Safety Commissioner Michael Campion said he facilitated a meeting in 1993 between Jacobs and a man who alleged that Jacobs abused him and his younger brother in the 1960s.

Campion said the man wanted to confront Jacobs but not press charges. Campion said he took the allegations to the state attorney general's office but was told the statute of limitations had run out.

The court document alleges that administrators at the camp and schools knew Jacobs had problems with pedophilia. After he allegedly fondled a 14-year-old boy in the early 1970s, the boy's parents told Blake administrators. "The defendant did not teach at Blake after this meeting," the prosecutor's statement said.

A Blake spokeswoman declined to comment.

After Blake, Jacobs taught at Breck, where the school knew he had seen a psychiatrist who diagnosed a sleep disorder. The psychiatrist treated Jacobs over "an incident at Blake School," but assured Breck officials he could safely work with children "as long as he wasn't sleeping in the same room with them," the document said.

Jacobs left Breck in 1975 but remained a consultant in its outdoor recreation program until 1976. Five of the newly disclosed incidents allegedly occurred with Breck students who slept at Jacobs' house or camped with him. A mother removed her son from Breck because "she was concerned about their response" to her complaints that Jacobs fondled her son, the document said.

Freeman took the unusual step of calling a news conference to announce the new filing. He repeatedly asked anyone alleging abuse to call the sheriff's hotline at 763-525-6216.

Most of 17 newly disclosed alleged victims claim that Jacobs fondled them while they slept. Freeman proposes using the accusations as "Spreigl" evidence, and Judge Daniel Moreno is expected to determine whether a jury hears them. The alleged incidents occurred outside the statute of limitations, meaning it's too late to charge Jacobs with them.

Deputy County Attorney Pat Diamond said Spreigl evidence can be used to prove intent, motive and absence of mistake. It cannot be used to prove habit.

In a statement, Breck said the school has been in "full cooperation" with the investigation. "Our policies and procedures, which are clearly and widely communicated, allow no tolerance for sexual abuse and are in place to protect our students' physical, mental and emotional health," the statement said.

Johnston notes in the document that YMCA camp records from the early 1970s say Jacobs had "pedophilic tendencies" and a "problem at Taft," a Connecticut school where he taught from 1965 to 1970. Jacobs brought Taft students to Camp Warren.

The YMCA said in a statement that it offered authorities full cooperation and access to old records. "It is important to note that current YMCA leaders were unaware of allegations against Jacobs dating back over 40 years and had no knowledge of any concerns about his past behavior," the statement said, adding that the YMCA has a "zero tolerance policy" and gives staff extensive training on abuse prevention.

Staff writer Paul Walsh contributed to this report. Rochelle Olson • 612-673-1747

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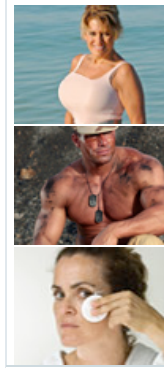
The man, 57, is tormented he didn't come forward sooner about what he said happened back in the '60s.

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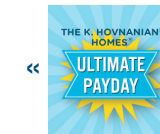
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