

Former sheriff's deputy reaches plea agreement in sex with minor case

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LAKEPORT, Calif. – A former sheriff's deputy arrested in 2007 for having been sexually involved with a young teenage girl has reached a plea agreement in the case.

Derik Dion Navarro, 39, pleaded guilty to one count of felony unlawful intercourse with a child under age 16, according to California Attorney General's Office spokesperson Becca MacLaren.

The plea agreement was reached on Wednesday, just as court records indicated Navarro's jury trial was getting ready to begin.

When he is sentenced at 8:15 a.m. Jan. 9 in Lake County Superior Court's Department Three, Navarro will face three months in the Lake County Jail and three years of formal probation, MacLaren said.

MacLaren said Navarro will not be required to register as a sex offender.

When he was first arrested in April 2007, Navarro was facing charges of committing lewd and lascivious acts with a minor, sodomy and having sex with a minor under age 16, according to the initial law enforcement statements on the case.

It was alleged that Navarro had a sexual relationship with a 14-year-old girl from May 2005 through May 2006. Officials said the alleged acts took place when Navarro was not on duty as a sheriff's deputy.

In the early days of the case, the Lake County District Attorney's Office pursued 18 felony counts and two misdemeanor counts against Navarro for his alleged involvement with the 14-year-old and another teenage girl, as Lake County News has reported. However, MacLaren said the plea only pertains to one of the alleged victims.

The case has seen numerous delays, with hearings and trials rescheduled several times over the last four and a half years, based on court records.

Navarro's case originally had been prosecuted by the Lake County District Attorney's Office.

However, after District Attorney Don Anderson took office at the start of the year, it was handed over to the Attorney General's Office because of a conflict of interest, as Lake County News reported in April.

Anderson told Lake County News this spring that the conflict arose because the Police Officers Research Association of California had appointed him to represent Navarro during an administrative hearing regarding his employment. Deputy Attorney General Dave Druliner handled the resolution of Navarro's case.

Navarro worked for the Lake County Sheriff's office from 2002 to 2007.

In a 2007 interview, then-Sheriff Rod Mitchell said his command staff received information in January 2007 that led to an internal investigation into allegations of misconduct on Navarro's part. The same day as the information was received, Navarro was placed on administrative leave pending the investigation's outcome.

"The matter was of such consequence that we asked Lake County District Attorney investigators to conduct a separate and independent criminal investigation," Mitchell said at the time.

Following a lengthy District Attorney's Office investigation, Navarro was arrested exactly a week after his termination, officials reported.

E-mail Elizabeth Larson at elanson@lakeconews.com. Follow Lake County News on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/LakeCoNews>, on Tumblr at www.lakeconews.tumblr.com, on Google+, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/pages/Lake-County-News/143156775604?ref=mfand on YouTube at www.youtube.com/user/LakeCoNews.

