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Police officer faces sex allegation

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GateHouse News Service

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Havana — A part-time Manito police officer made his initial court appearance in Havana Thursday, after being arrested Tuesday for criminal sexual assault and official misconduct.

Illinois State Police officers arrested Nicholas W. Butler, 27, Tuesday after he admitted to them during an interview that “he had met a 17-year-old girl through his official capacity as a police officer,” according to court records.

“They subsequently developed a relationship and eventually had sex (consensual) on one occasion,” the records said.

Mason County State’s Attorney Kristen Miller said she has not filed formal charges but she requested that Butler’s bail be set at \$50,000, which is an amount she typically seeks for people charged with serious felony charges. Eighth Circuit Judge Alan D. Tucker set the bail at \$25,000, so Butler can get out of jail if he pays 10 percent of that amount.

Butler — who has a Delavan address listed in the court records — was arrested for criminal sexual assault, a Class 1 felony that carries a possible prison sentence of four to 15 years upon conviction, and for official misconduct, which is a Class 3 felony with a possible prison sentence of two to five years.

Miller told Tucker there is no allegation of Butler using physical force, nor was she aware of any allegation of the incident involving any drugs or alcohol.

Butler said he was born and raised in central Illinois, but that he had left to serve in the military and had returned to the area in September.

Manito Village Board President Tim Sondag told GateHouse News Service that Butler was sworn in as a part-time police officer Oct. 3. He was still in training when Manito officials learned of the ISP investigation and was placed on administrative leave until his arrest, according to Sondag. He was terminated from the village’s employment upon his arrest.

Miller said she intends to file formal charges against Butler before his scheduled appearance with counsel, set for 10 a.m. Thursday.

Tucker appointed Mason County Public Defender Roger Thomson to defend Butler.