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News

VIDEOS: Sgt. Patrick Rosney's arrest 'deeply disturbing'

Saturday, June 2, 2012

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TROY — A 26-year veteran of the Troy Police Department was arrested by New York City Police Friday for sending sexually explicit images to a person whom he thought was an underage girl.

Sgt. Pat Rosney was arrested at the Troy Police station without incident, according to Chief John Tedesco. He was in police uniform but was afforded the opportunity to change, Tedesco added.

Rosney, who is married with children, has been charged with first-degree attempted dissemination of indecent material to minors, a felony, and attempted endangering the welfare of a child, a misdemeanor, after allegedly communicating online with someone whom he thought was a 14-year-old girl. Instead, authorities say, the person was a NYPD officer.

According to Queens County District Attorney Richard Brown, Rosney sent sexually explicit messages as well as a digital video of his genitals to the undercover officer whom he began contacting on May 15. He tried setting up a meeting with the girl for sex on June 5, according to Brown.

“It is disturbing to think that a police officer would conduct himself in such a manner as to send a person whom he believed to be an underage female sexually explicit messages and web cam images of his genitals,” Brown said in a statement.

Rosney was the longtime head of the Troy Police Department's Special Operations Section, which conducted long-term drug investigations until it was re-organized. His latest duties were as a records officer.

Tedesco said there are no allegations of sexual contact with a minor or being in possession of or trading child pornography. There are some indications, however, that he did mention he was a police officer during the conversations, he said.

A search warrant was executed at Rosney's home near the Rensselaer/East Greenbush line where several computers were confiscated.

The Troy Police Department's Internal Affairs bureau was contacted late Wednesday afternoon about the arrest. NYPD did not let TPD in on the investigation, however, until it was ready to make an arrest. The Troy department has begun its own investigation to see if any local charges are warranted and is looking into the possibility of opening a criminal investigation, but there is no indication that Rosney was involved with any minors locally.

No other arrests are expected to be made.

“Although we have no reason to believe on-duty conduct has been involved and there is no evidence of his use of his sworn status to further his alleged conduct, our actions regarding this matter will be swift and thorough,” Tedesco said.

Rosney has been suspended without pay, according to Tedesco, and has been relieved of his duty weapon as well as his credentials.

Mayor Lou Rosamilia called the allegations “deplorable” and said the city and the police department will comply with the New York City Police Department in any way it can.

“This is a deeply disturbing incident and certainly not reflective of the overall character and quality of our Police Department,” Rosamilia said in a prepared statement. “The legal process will play out and I am sure the individual charged will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.”

Several officers had been briefed on the situation, Tedesco said, but he admitted he was “shocked” when he was informed the arrest was forthcoming by Deputy Chief Richard McAvoy.

While many in the department are upset over the incident, Tedesco said it is a tough and strong agency that will get through it.

The Police Benevolent Association is usually in charge of defending any officer in legal trouble. However, because this is a criminal matter unrelated to his duties as an officer, Rosney will have to provide his own defense, according to PBA President Bob Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald, who said he was there when Rosney was arrested, said it can be demoralizing and hurtful to see a fellow police officer taken away in handcuffs and seen as a black eye on the department. He said he told his men to try and not let it bother them and continue on with their job of keeping the streets safe.

However, the PBA head did say that during a time when violent crime is rising and the department is struggling to keep the community's trust situations like this can be a setback.

"We have to gain the trust of this community," Fitzgerald said. "We're a call away from losing that trust and this is the call. I hope the chief and the mayor can pull the city together and get the job done."

Rosney was arraigned in Queens County Court on Friday.

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