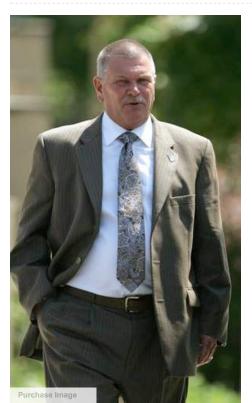


Jury hears ex-police chief case

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Former Marlboro Police Chief Robert C. Holmes. / press file photo

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Arguing the state's case, Assistant Monmouth County Prosecutor Peter Boser told the jury Holmes gave the victim several cocktails of Captain Morgan rum and Coke before his first act of sexual assault, which occurred at his home in April 2005, and then subsequently abused her another five or six times.

FREEHOLD — For two years, former Marlboro Police Chief Robert C. Holmes got a girl drunk with rum and coke before sexually abusing her, a prosecutor argued in court. This went on from the time the girl was 12 until 14 years old and Holmes was the head of the department.

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The girl, Holmes' attorney countered, is a disturbed teenager from a dysfunctional family who is not telling the truth.

A jury of nine men and seven women heard those arguments as the trial began Thursday before state Superior Court Judge Richard W. English.

Holmes, 64 of Marlboro, is charged with aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault, endangering the welfare of a child, aggravated criminal sexual contact and criminal sexual contact. He is charged with assaulting the girl between April 2005 and March 2007, He was indicted in July 2009, and has pleaded not guilty.

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Holmes used the fact that the girl had been drinking underage to keep her silent, Boser said. "He made sure she remembered that she was the one who was going to be in trouble. Captain and Coke kept her trapped," Boser said.

Boser outlined the time line of Holmes' alleged actions, and how it lined up with the charges against the former chief.

Holmes' attorney, Edward C. Bertucio with the law firm Hobbie, Corrigan and Bertucio of Eatontown, said his

client was an upstanding public servant, one who "fought 35 years to keep Marlboro safe." He described Holmes' accuser as "a young lady (who) was, and is, deeply troubled and disturbed."

Bertucio also challenged the time line presented by the victim and the prosecutor's office, and went on to attack the victim's family's credibility.

A 36-year department veteran and an 11-year chief who was making \$180,000 a year, Holmes retired from the Marlboro Township Police Department on Dec. 31, 2008 with a \$73,000 retirement package that included an \$18,200 salary bump and \$55,000 in unused sick, vacation, comp and holiday time.

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