

Anoka County: Deal may be near in case of ex-cop accused of soliciting young girls

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Bradley James Schnickel (Courtesy of the Anoka County sheriff's office)

A settlement may be coming in the case against a former Minneapolis police officer accused of soliciting young girls on the Internet for sex.

After meeting Friday in Anoka County District Court, both Bradley Schnickel's defense attorney and the prosecution said the two sides are close to reaching a resolution.

They will meet in a settlement hearing Monday, the same day the trial against the 33-year-old father of two was set to begin.

"We are working it out. ... We're getting close," said Fred Bruno, Schnickel's attorney. "This will most likely be resolved Monday."

Schnickel faces more than 21 criminal counts alleging criminal sexual misconduct, lewd exhibition, furnishing alcohol to a minor and other accusations.

Using various aliases, Schnickel is accused of logging onto Facebook and other social networking sites and engaging in sexually charged conversations with more than a dozen young girls. In some cases, he exchanged naked pictures with the minors. In a couple instances, he allegedly met them in person and had sex.

The youngest alleged victim was 11. Several others were 12 to 14.

None of the conduct took place while Schnickel was working as a cop.

The former Minneapolis patrol officer received a medal of commendation for his work in 2011. He was placed on "home assignment" in January 2013 after the allegations surfaced.

He was fired the following month.

Monday's hearing comes just over three months after he pleaded guilty in Hennepin County District Court to two counts of Internet solicitation of children for similar crimes.

Schnickel was sentenced to a year at the Hennepin County Adult Corrections Facility in Plymouth and mandated to undergo therapy.

He is already enrolled in a sex offender treatment program at Alpha Human Services in Minneapolis.

Schnickel's hearing Monday will take place at 2 p.m.