

Former officer heads for trial on sex charges

Written by Joanne Maliszewski Staff Writer
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A former Detroit police officer, a Farmington Hills resident, waived his right to a preliminary exam Friday on sexual assault charges in connection with two minors.

Judge Marla Parker of the 47th District Court bound Geoffrey Townsend, 43, over for trial on six charges of criminal sexual conduct in the third degree.

He will face trial in Oakland County Circuit Court. A trial date has not yet been set.

“He wants to waive,” defense attorney John Brewster, who represents Townsend, told Parker Friday morning, the date set for his preliminary exam.

Oakland County Assistant Prosecutor Tricia Dare did not oppose the request.

She also agreed to Brewster's request to continue Townsend's \$25,000 cash or surety bond. Townsend is free and on an electronic tether. Parker agreed to amend the tether hours, allowing Townsend to work for a landscaping business until the evening hours. He is no longer working as an officer with the Detroit Police Department.

Farmington Hills police arrested Townsend at 12 Mile and Drake roads Tuesday, March 26. He is the co-founder of Reality Check of Detroit, a boot camp that works with teens who have behavior problems.

At the time of his arrest, Townsend was charged in connection with a female victim, born in 1997, who met Townsend through the boot camp program, which he operated outside of his work as a Detroit police officer. The girl was 14-15 years old at the time of the reported incident.

In April, two additional charges were brought in connection with a second female victim, who was 15 at the time of the alleged incidents. Townsend stood mute on the additional charges.

Family and friends have continued to support Townsend, filling half of Parker's courtroom each time he is in court.

In an unrelated sexual assault case, Andrew Montgomery Howell, 58, who is accused of sexually assaulting a student, will return to 47th District Court for a preliminary exam on May 22.

Howell faces a charge of second-degree criminal sexual assault in connection with a 7-year-old girl at Hillside Elementary School in Farmington Hills while he worked as a substitute teacher for the Farmington Public Schools.

The alleged incident took place during school hours on March 19.

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