

Former Waverly cop pleads guilty to sex crime

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The former Waverly police officer who allegedly sexually assaulted a 16-year-old girl while on duty in March has pleaded guilty.

Thirty-year-old Jeremy Angelo of Chatham entered an open plea in Morgan County Court this afternoon to the charge of criminal sexual assault. A second count of aggravated criminal sexual abuse was dropped as part of the plea deal.

Angelo is accused of having sex with the girl while on duty in the back room of the Waverly Police Department on March 14th. Angelo was found with the girl by the department's assistant police chief and resigned that night.

Criminal sexual assault is a Class 1 felony that carries a sentence of four to fifteen years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. Morgan County State's Attorney Robert Bonjean set the cap at ten years as part of the sentence consideration.

"I haven't boxed myself in to what I'm going to recommend," says Bonjean. "I'm going to wait and review the pre-sentence investigation, talk again with the family. I've kept them informed of what's going on and that this day was probably coming sooner than later."

Angelo is eligible for probation.

Bonjean says while Angelo had no criminal history, his being in a position of trust was considered by the state to be a factor.

"The old adage when we teach our children growing up that police officers are there to protect and serve, that when you're in trouble, you go to the nearest police officer, they're there to protect. This is a situation and allegation and a conviction of this nature that kind of destroys that trust," he says. "So I'm going to take that into consideration in recommending a sentence."

Bonjean says the Illinois State Police collected DNA evidence at the scene and says that, along with Angelo's statement, would have been the main evidence presented by the state.

Angelo was represented by Jacksonville attorney Richard Crews. Because it was an open plea, there was not an immediate sentencing. A hearing for that will be held December 17th.