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## OPD: Officer previously arrested in sex case has resigned

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An officer arrested last year on suspicion of having sex with a 16-year-old prostitute has resigned from the Ocala Police Department.

Bennie Lee Wilson III, 41, came to headquarters Thursday and turned in his uniform all of his other OPD equipment. Wilson then offered his resignation, which was accepted, and left. In the parking lot, he declined to comment to the Star-Banner.

On Oct. 28, OPD Sgt. Brian Young was been asked to investigate a criminal complaint against Wilson.

Young talked with the then 16-year-old girl, who said that about a month and a half earlier she ran away from home and was involved in prostitution, according to OPD officials. The girl alleged that one night she saw Wilson and they talked. During the conversation, she said, Wilson fondled her.

She told Young that two weeks later she again met Wilson and they engaged in sexual activity, according to OPD. Afterward, she said, Wilson gave her \$20.

Young later interviewed Wilson, who admitted to the sexual activity and said he knew the girl was under 18, officials said. Wilson was then arrested on two counts of unlawful sexual activity with a minor.

An internal affairs investigation into Wilson's conduct has been completed and will be sent to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for possible action regarding his law enforcement certification, OPD officials said.

According to his personnel file, Wilson worked with the Albany Police Department in Georgia for 18 years before coming to Florida. He left Albany as a sergeant. He had multiple letters of commendation.

In the early 1990s, Wilson served in the U.S. Navy and was honorably discharged, according to his records. He also was a law enforcement officer with the Sumter County Sheriff's Office for a year.

He was hired by the OPD on Sept. 4, 2012. In his last evaluation, Wilson was recognized for doing his job without complaints, having a positive attitude, being professional and filing reports free of errors.

His salary at the time of his resignation was \$36,003.96.

Court records show Wilson is being represented by Melanie Slaughter and that his next court appearance is in February.

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