

Peoria policeman John McCavitt convicted of child porn possession

By

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2013 Cop Pedophile John McCavitt

PEORIA — Jurors took about three hours over two days to find a Peoria police officer guilty of possessing child pornography on his home computer.

John McCavitt, 35, was found guilty Thursday on 15 of the 17 counts of child porn and aggravated child porn possession he faced. He now faces three years, and possibly much more, in prison when sentenced Aug. 25 by Judge Albert Purham Jr.

And in a rare move, Purham revoked McCavitt's bond and ordered him taken into custody. The judge cited the fact that McCavitt didn't allow police into his home on July 17, 2013, even though they were knocking on his door and calling his cellphone. Prosecutors contended he was using that time to delete several images from his computer, images that were later partially recovered by a computer expert with the Peoria Police Department.

McCavitt's attorney, Kevin Sullivan, argued his client, who has been free on bond for about three years in this and another case, should continue to remain out of custody. But Purham said no.

On each aggravated child porn possession charge, McCavitt faces up to seven years but state law requires that if he receives prison time on more than one count, they must run consecutive or one after another. However, the counts are also probationable as well.

McCavitt remained stoic and didn't show any emotion while the verdicts were read or when he was taken into custody. He said nothing during the 15 minutes he was in court Thursday morning.

Evidence presented during the four-day trial showed that the images, said to be in the thousands, were on his computer at some point between April 2011 and July 2013, when the computer was seized by police. He was initially arrested on sexual assault charges but was acquitted at a jury trial in March 2014. After that verdict, the images were found by a Peoria police computer expert during the department's internal investigation. Only a few images were found intact. Most were in fragments and pieces because of the program that McCavitt had used to delete them.

McCavitt has been on unpaid leave for months. His status as an officer was unknown Thursday but the city will likely begin the process to terminate him and to revoke his commission because of his conviction.

And McCavitt's legal woes aren't done. He also has an unauthorized videotaping case pending which could add an additional three years onto any sentence he receives in the possession of child porn case.

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