

## Former deputy clerk gets 18-month sentence on sex charges - Chronicle-Telegram

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*Former deputy clerk of courts William Tyrone Montgomery, right, with attorney Jack Bradley, awaits his sentencing on charges of molesting a girl for a decade starting in the 1980s. STEVE MANHEIM/CHRONICLE*

ELYRIA — William Tyrone Montgomery was sentenced Monday to 1½ years in prison for molesting a young girl in the 1980s, beginning when she was 8 years old.

Montgomery, 52, resigned from his longtime job as a deputy clerk for Lorain County Clerk of Courts Ron Nabakowski earlier this month under public pressure after pleading guilty to gross sexual imposition charges in March. His plea was part of a deal that saw prosecutors drop additional charges of rape and sexual battery.

Montgomery also was labeled a sexually oriented offender and will have to register for

10 years after his release from prison.

Although the victim, who now is an adult, wasn't in court Monday, Assistant County Prosecutor Chris Pierre read a letter she wrote urging county Common Pleas Judge Mark Betleski to impose a prison sentence.

The victim wrote that Montgomery had molested her for a decade and she endured it because she was afraid she was going to get in trouble herself or suffer other consequences if she told anyone.

"I locked all the bad stuff away in a separate little box in my brain," the letter said.

She wrote that the abuse made her feel terrible and that "rotten became my normal."

The victim said that in her mind justice for Montgomery would see him serving time in prison, where he could feel some of what she felt while he was sexually abusing her.

"I want him to live locked away in a little box," the letter said. "I want him to live in fear."

Montgomery apologized in court for his actions.

"I'm truly sorry for what I have done," he said. "Through the course of my life I have never wanted to hurt anybody."

Defense attorney Jack Bradley said Montgomery also had apologized to the girl's family about

four years ago. Montgomery was indicted in August 2013, shortly before the statute of limitations in the case would have run out.

He said his client still has the backing of his church and several co-workers and supporters who wrote letters to Betleski urging leniency.

But Pierre countered that those supporting Montgomery weren't around when he was molesting the victim and couldn't attest to who he truly was.

"Character is who you are and what you do when no one else is around, and the state would submit that (the victim) knows what the defendant is like when no one else is around," he said.

Betleski said he was imposing the sentence based on the charges Montgomery had pleaded guilty to, not the allegations that had been leveled.

He also was critical of the direction the public discourse surrounding Montgomery's employment took.

Although Nabakowski had said he would wait until after sentencing to decide what to do with Montgomery, he also said that he was unlikely to fire him if he received probation. That brought complaints from the public and county Commissioner Tom Williams, who pushed for Montgomery to be barred from county property if he wasn't fired.

Betleski said the debate failed to take into account the low recidivism rates of sex offenders and that those who had called for Montgomery to be fired didn't appear to know that. He also said that those who believe felons shouldn't be allowed to have jobs should avoid most of the restaurants in the county.

Williams, who didn't attend the hearing, said he was disappointed to learn of Betleski's comments.

"If that's the way the judge feels, he's out of touch with the way the majority of people feel," he said.

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