

Disrespect, names said to stem from complainant being single woman

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GREEN BAY - A lawyer for a Green Bay police officer has filed a discrimination complaint against the city, claiming some fellow officers harassed and demeaned her for more than a year because she is a woman and is single.

Officer Stephanie R. Dantoin, 28, of Green Bay, also alleges that two supervisors failed to stop the harassment though she complained "on numerous occasions." The complaint was filed with federal and state agencies that handle equal-rights cases.

Many of the allegations target R. Casey Masiak, one of two officers who resigned under pressure in December when allegations of officer-on-officer harassment on the overnight shift first became public.

Much of the alleged harassment was verbal, though Dantoin claims Masiak pushed her on at least one occasion.

Chief Andrew Smith said he doesn't tolerate harassment, and insisted he's "com-



Andrew Smith

mitted to rooting out" officers who don't meet the department's standards of professionalism. Smith said he launched an investigation when he learned that some officers might be harassing others. But he wouldn't discuss the Dantoin case.

"I have to be really cautious about what I say because there's an ongoing investigation," he said. "It would be wrong for me to comment now, even to deny (Dantoin's allegations)."

A letter from the state Department of Workforce Development said the city must respond by Friday. On Wednesday, Smith said he believed the city had yet to respond.

Dantoin remains on duty as a patrol officer, but has

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been reassigned to an earlier shift at her request, Smith said.

In her complaint, Dantoin alleges:

» Masiak, and other colleagues she did not name, criticized her performance and decision-making and treated her “in a disrespectful and demeaning manner” on nearly every shift she worked from summer 2015 into October 2016.

» Masiak and officer Kurt Brester sent “unprofessional and offensive messages” from the computer in her squad car while she was away from it, played pranks on her and canceled her from calls “without reason.” Her complaint does not offer details of the messages or alleged pranks.

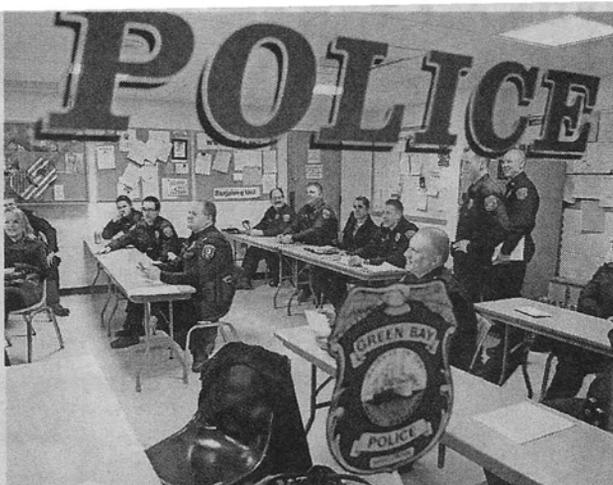
» Masiak, and officers she didn’t name “belittled her for not being married,” frequently calling her “crazy single cat lady.”

» Masiak took her handcuffs and lost or destroyed them.

» Lt. Steve Mahoney and Capt. Todd LePine failed “on numerous occasions” to stop the harassment after Dantoin complained.

Dantoin insists male officers weren’t subjected to similar treatment, or were treated professionally when they received criticism.

Rod Goldhahn, who chairs the city’s Police and Fire Commission, said the harassment case is worrisome, but he believes Smith is handling it well. Goldhahn didn’t learn until contacted by a reporter Thursday night that Dantoin had filed a claim, but said Smith had done the right thing by going public with news of the harassment investigation in December, and conducting a thorough



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Green Bay police officers gather for a briefing.

probe.

It’s unclear how the allegations of harassment between officers might be impacting morale within the department. Nate Allen, president of the Green Bay Professional Police Association, declined via email to comment.

In late February, Smith had said the harassment investigation would be resolved “in a month or more.” Almost five months later, the probe is ongoing and Smith couldn’t be certain when it would be complete.

“There were several people we needed to re-interview,” he said. “We’ve had three lieutenants and a captain working on it full-time.”

Dantoin joined Green Bay’s department in January 2015. She previously worked for the Racine Police Department.

Madison attorney Paul A. Kinne filed Dantoin’s claim on June 9 with the Equal Rights Division of the state Department of Workforce Development. Kinne could not be reached for comment.

DWD filed a copy of Dantoin’s complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the federal agency that deals with discrimination complaints.

Dantoin are the latest in a string of problems that have nagged the department since late 2016.

In unrelated cases, officer Michael Rahn is accused of falsifying details of a February arrest, and officer Michael Jeanquart was charged with forging his ex-wife’s signature on the title to a car they own. Jeanquart is

due in Brown County Circuit Court on Aug. 2.



Rahn

Additionally, a man later convicted of robbery filed a legal claim against Masiak and Brester, claiming they injured him during an arrest in August.

Smith has repeatedly vowed to have zero tolerance for those who fail to uphold the standards of the department, saying “people are going to be held accountable for their actions.”

Indeed, Masiak and Lt. Robert Korth resigned under pressure once the harassment allegations surfaced. Rahn, meanwhile, was gone after police officials discovered his written account of a 2016 arrest didn’t align with a video recording and accounts from other