

Ex-Green Bay officer seeks \$1.3 million

He says city disclosed
his personal records

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USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

GREEN BAY - A former Green Bay police officer is asking for \$1.3 million from the city, saying release of his personnel records caused him embarrassment, monetary loss and emotional damages.

In a two-page court filing, a lawyer for R. Casey Masiak of Bellevue claims the city caused the former officer to suffer damages by violating a confidentiality agreement when it released information about Masiak to USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin.

"Officer Masiak has suffered monetary damages, damage to reputation, his right to pursue mutual economic goals, mental anguish, embarrassment, loss of future earnings and career development, attorney fees and other expenses," attorney William Rettko of Brookfield wrote in late May.

The city denied the claim in mid-June, Rettko said. USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin obtained it Monday via an Open Records Law request.

At issue: The public disclosure of an agreement in which police officials accepted Masiak's resignation and agreed to clear his personnel file of evidence that he was investigated in connection with the harassment of fellow officers on the department's night shift.

The city also agreed to provide Masiak with "neutral references" for potential future employers, Rettko wrote.

In the agreement, the city agreed to keep the details of Ma-

Masiak

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siak's departure confidential unless compelled to do so for legal reasons, such as being subpoenaed in a court case.

The city released the records to the news organization in early April, five weeks after a reporter requested them under Wisconsin's Open Records Law. Records of an otherwise confidential settlement must be released under such circumstances.

For Masiak, the results have been devastating, his lawyer wrote.

"With the public disclosure of the resignation agreement," Rettko wrote, "Officer Masiak's public reputation has been destroyed and his career prospects have been eliminated."

City officials had no comment on Masiak's claim Monday.

Police Chief Andrew Smith referred questions to the city's Law Department. Calls to two staff attorneys were not returned. A message left with the city's chief of staff, Celestine Jeffreys, also was not returned.



Smith

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The department has begun to impose discipline on other officers involved in the harassment case, Internal Affairs Capt. John Balza said. The investigation technically has not concluded, but officials said they expect no firings or further resignations.

Police officials called the case the biggest internal investigation in the department's history. Smith said roughly three dozen department employees have been interviewed by internal affairs personnel.

Masiak, and Lt. Robert Korth, stopped performing police work in December. Smith has said the officers resigned before they could be fired after the city began an investigation into harassment of fellow officers. He said about six officers harassed a similar number of black, Hispanic, Asian and female officers over about 18 months.

They later negotiated resignation dates of Feb. 1 for Korth, and Feb. 15 for Masiak.

Rettko said Monday he is reviewing Masiak's options. He would not say what their next

step would be.

In another case involving the department, Officer Michael Jeanquart has not been performing police duties since Smith learned Jeanquart was the target of a forgery investigation regarding a signature on the title of a car he owned with his ex-wife.

Smith said in late July that Jeanquart had been "dismissed" from the department. He clarified that last week to say that he prohibited him from performing police duties. Smith said the officer is not being paid.

"We have been advised," Smith said, "that he's going to resign."

Firing of a Green Bay police officer requires approval from the city's Police and Fire Commission. Chairman Rod Goldhahn said Monday there's nothing on the panel's agenda regarding Jeanquart — another indication that a resignation is likely.

A special prosecutor alleges that Jeanquart signed his ex-wife's name to their automobile title without permission so he could sell the car on Craigslist when she was out of town. He faces two felony charges; the case is next due in court in September.