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BFD Puts Alleged Rapist Pearson On Paid Leave

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Massachusetts - The Boston deputy fire chief accused of raping an alleged prostitute at gunpoint after stalking her for three weeks was placed on paid administrative leave after posting \$50,000 bail yesterday in Brockton District Court. Peter Pearson, 51, of East Bridgewater, Division 2 deputy chief and a 23-year veteran of the department, was arraigned on charges of armed kidnapping, rape and impersonating a police officer for an incident in June after the alleged victim identified him Monday night as her assailant.

Pearson was previously arrested for engaging in sex for a fee in 1996, but the case was continued without a finding, said prosecutor Shelby Smith, who had pressed for \$250,000 bail. Smith said Pearson also defaulted on a court case 22 years ago, but did not elaborate on the nature of the case.

Judge Mary White ordered Pearson to stay away from the victim and wear a GPS monitoring bracelet.

Dressed in a suit, Pearson remained stoic while appearing behind a glass partition in court. He was accompanied by his wife of more than 30 years.

Brockton police yesterday said the alleged victim, a 37-year-old woman known to police, was being held on a charge of being a common nightwalker when she recounted the alleged rape on July 1, several weeks after she claimed it occurred.

Defense attorney Kate Barnes argued that Pearson, a father of two and one of 14 children who grew up in Dorchester, is a model citizen who worked his way up the ranks of the Boston Fire Department. He also works at the Boston Harbor Hotel as a security officer. He took home \$158,968 in pay last year from his deputy chief's post, according to Boston payroll records.

"These are serious charges," Barnes said. "These are quite simply allegations my client denies."

After the arraignment, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz said the charges are indeed serious. Pearson is accused of posing as a cop during the alleged rape.

"People that are out there that are pretending to be something that they're not really pose a threat to our society," Cruz said.

Boston Fire spokesman Steve MacDonald said the department was unaware of Pearson's 1996 arrest. Pearson also had no history of disciplinary problems with the department, he said.

Written by Boston Herald

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