

COURT & JUSTICE

## Prosecutors hid evidence of Olmsted Falls officer's history of verbal abuse toward women, woman claims

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A woman says prosecutors hid evidence of an Olmsted Falls police officer's disciplinary history from her in a criminal case. (Marvin Fong, The Plain Dealer, File, 2013)

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CLEVELAND, Ohio -- A woman who says an Olmsted Falls police sergeant used excessive force and an anti-LGBT 2016 arrest now says Cuyahoga County prosecutors withheld from her evidence that showed the officer has a aggression toward women.

Christie Elko filed a request to withdraw her February no-contest plea to a misdemeanor resisting arrest charge received the full disciplinary history of Sgt. Floyd Takacs as part of a civil rights lawsuit.

The records show that Takacs, who was involved in what was later determined by police brass to be an attempt Mayor Anne Marie Donegan for domestic violence in 2015, racked up several complaints that demonstrate a high aggression and verbal explosions toward women that should have cost him his job, Elko's lawyer, Peter Pattak release.

"His assault of Ms. Elko could have been prevented had Olmsted Falls used responsible employment practices firm is involved in Elko's lawsuit, said.

The motion also accuses Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael O'Malley's office of violating a judge's order an constitutional right to due process when they did not turn over the full disciplinary file.

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O'Malley's office said they will respond to the filing in court, and declined to comment.

The city has denied claims in Elko's lawsuit.

## **THE ARREST**

Takacs stopped Elko on the street after being called for a domestic violence allegation by Elko's partner in Sep Takacs was aggressive, threw her down and called her a "stupid f-----g d--e" during her arrest, according to the

Takacs did not turn on his body camera during the encounter, the motion says.

Elko was indicted on a felony assault charge and was charged with misdemeanor domestic violence after her a no contest to the domestic violence charge in Berea Municipal Court.

Elko filed a civil rights lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Northern Ohio while her felony case was still pending. Co Judge Joseph Russo ordered Olmsted Falls police to give him Takac's personnel file in September 2017 so he c portions Elko and her attorneys should get, according to court records.

In October, Russo told the assistant Cuyahoga County prosecutor who handled the case, Geoffrey Minter, to tu personnel file, according to the motion.

Minter then gave Elko's lawyer, Gina Crawford, three pages of disciplinary records that included a referral for T. exam to determine whether he's fit for duty, the motion says.

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Elko and Minter worked out a plea deal in February that saw her plead no contest to a misdemeanor resisting arrest, and the felony assault on a police officer charge dropped. She was sentenced to time served.

## THE FILE

Takacs was among the handful of Olmsted Falls police officers who an internal investigation revealed in 2017 covered up with and falsified evidence to bring domestic violence charges against then-mayor Donegan. Those charges were dropped, and the city paid her a \$450,000 settlement.

That internal investigation is now the subject of two civil lawsuits filed against Donegan and the city.

Elko received Takacs' full personnel file in May, when Olmsted Falls police gave it to her civil lawyers in response to her civil rights lawsuit, according to the motion. The file contained 275 pages beyond what Minter handed over, the motion said.

The documents included numerous complaints about Takacs spanning from 2009 to 2015, with complaints from a sergeant, a female dispatcher and Mayor Donegan, who all said that Takacs either bullied or intimidated them, creating a hostile work environment.

Takacs was suspended for one day in 2015 after Donegan said he drove his cruiser by her home while she was at work in an attempt to intimidate her over her decision not to hire the nephew of then-Chief Daniel Gilles.

"His behavior and mannerism were purposeful and intended to harass, intimidate only in my mind akin to a threat of physical driving by an adversary in an attempt to intimidate," Donegan wrote in her complaint.

A female dispatcher in 2009 said Takacs became "extremely emotional, violent and unreasonably out of control during an argument and the city's law director said two people who witnessed the exchange gave accounts that sided with the dispatcher's records say.

The dispatcher wrote in her complaint that Takacs' behavior had long been problematic and that she once used a derogatory word to describe a female coworker.

A department lieutenant who investigated the incident sided with the dispatcher and noted in a letter to then-mayor Donegan that Takacs "verbally exploded" on the dispatcher. He also noted that Takacs had a history of outbursts, and "in this state of anger, he seems to be attacking her or other employees on personal issues that should not be reviewed."

A fellow sergeant in March 2011 filed a complaint saying that Takacs continually created a "hostile work environment."

cursed at her when she left her police cruiser running to melt ice on the outside of her car.

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A woman who had police respond to her house during a domestic dispute in 2014 filed a formal complaint saying to "screw off" after he walked into her bedroom.

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