

ST. PAUL

St. Paul reaches \$60,000 settlement with cop who claimed harassment

City to pay a female sergeant who claims she was sexually harassed by boss in 2010.

By Nicole Norfleet (<https://www.startribune.com/nicole-norfleet/6370611/>) Star Tribune |

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St. Paul has reached a \$60,000 settlement with a St. Paul police sergeant who sued the city and senior police officials claiming that she was the victim of sexual harassment and discrimination, according to a City Council agenda made available Thursday.

Aine M. Bebeau, 50, who worked for the department for more than 26 years, has been on unpaid administrative leave for more than year after reporting that she was sexually harassed by Eugene Polyak, who is now senior commander of citywide services.

An internal affairs investigation found evidence that Polyak didn't follow proper procedure and was in violation of the workplace conduct policy.

Under terms of the settlement agreement that is likely to be approved by the City Council next week, Bebeau agreed to not seek reinstatement. According to court records, the city had asked for Bebeau to resign voluntarily.

The agreement also said that the defendants in the suit — the city, Polyak, Chief Tom Smith, former Assistant Chief Ken Reed and Assistant Chief Kathy Wuorinen — don't admit to any wrongdoing.

According to a lawsuit filed by Bebeau in July 2013, Polyak allegedly made inappropriate sexual statements to her several times in 2010, when Bebeau was working for Polyak in the juvenile unit.

The suit alleged that Polyak at first complained to Bebeau about his marital problems. His statements, however, became more inappropriate over time, progressing to suggestions that the two have drinks and sex, the suit said.

Bebeau reported Polyak's alleged behavior to Reed and Wuorinen during a meeting later that year but was later reprimanded for improper conduct at the meeting.

A day later, Bebeau was placed on paid administrative leave, according to her personnel file. The department posted no-trespassing posters with her picture at some of the department's offices where they could be seen by employees and the public, the suit said.

Bebeau's file shows that after she was put on leave in December 2010, she returned a month later, only to go on leave again in August 2011. She stopped receiving pay in March 2013.

Polyak's personnel file shows that he was disciplined in April 2011 in connection with the harassment allegations. He was suspended for six days. He also was ordered to attend training on workplace conduct and management and to meet with Reed and work on leadership issues.

Smith said in a letter to Polyak that Polyak had admitted to making inappropriate remarks including some that were offensive. "There are many issues regarding this incident which are of concern to me," Smith wrote. "Your actions reflect poorly on you and the department."

According to his personnel file, Polyak was also disciplined in another case in 2002 for a preventable accident. He has more than 20 commendations during his nearly 30-year career with the St. Paul police.

Bebeau, meanwhile, has been reprimanded three times for conduct unbecoming a police officer and once for insubordination, according to her personnel file. She's had 26 commendations over her St. Paul police career.

Staff writer Chao Xiong contributed to this report.

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