

# Press Release

## **DECISION RENDERED IN OFFICER PETERSON DISCIPLINE MATTER Oak Brook, Illinois (February 19, 2011, 10:30 a.m.)**

At the hearing today in the discipline matter involving Police Officer Stephen Peterson, the Oak Brook Board of Fire and Police Commissioners entered their Findings and Decision.

The Board found Officer Peterson guilty on the charges specified in Charge One of the Statement of Charges.

In finding Officer Peterson guilty on the charges specified in Charge One, the Board considered the contradictory testimony given by Officer Peterson concerning the reason that the weapons were given to him and the circumstances by which the funds were transferred to him as well as his rationale for not immediately disclosing that information to the Illinois State Police.

The evidence, including Officer Peterson's own testimony, conclusively establishes that Officer Peterson exercised extremely poor judgment with respect to the weapons and the money that he received from his father, Drew Peterson. Moreover, Officer Peterson's own testimony and demeanor at the hearing demonstrated his refusal to acknowledge any error in judgment on his part. Whether the weapons or the money ultimately held any evidentiary value relative to the investigation into the disappearance of Stacy Peterson is irrelevant. Considering the totality of the circumstances it was incumbent on Officer Peterson to immediately disclose his receipt of the weapons and the money to the appropriate authorities and he willfully elected to ignore that obligation.

The Board finds Officer Peterson not guilty of the charges contained in Charge Two of the Statement of Charges by operation of the Law Enforcement Officer Safety Act of 2004 (LEOSA).

The Board finds Officer Peterson not guilty of the charges contained in Charge Three of the Statement of Charges because he was the subject of the investigation.

In considering the appropriate discipline for the above-referenced violations, the Board has considered the Respondent's prior discipline, including prior suspensions. The Board has considered the seriousness of the present charges and violations. In determining the appropriate discipline, the Board has considered the reasonable level of judgment expected of someone granted the extraordinary legal authority of police power. Moreover, Officer Peterson's continuing claim that the weapons and money were irrelevant to the investigation by the Illinois State Police were self-serving, disingenuous, not credible and demonstrate that Officer Peterson lacks the fundamental ability to make sound judgments.

In view of the above findings, the Board of Fire and Police Commissioners hereby ordered the Respondent, Stephen Peterson, be discharged from his employment as a Police Officer of the Village of Oak Brook effective immediately.

### **About the Village of Oak Brook:**

Founded in 1958, the Village of Oak Brook is located 20 miles west of downtown Chicago and is in proximity to the junction of Interstates 88, 294, and 290. The Village, which levies no municipal property tax, consists mostly of residential subdivisions, with the exception of the Oak Brook Center shopping mall, other retail and office properties along 22nd Street and Interstate 88. Oak Brook is the home of many corporate offices, most notably, the world headquarters of McDonald's Corporation and the service club organization Lions Clubs International.

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