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Man freed because of officer dishonesty

Jana Peterson
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The fallout from a former Cloquet Police Department officer's untruths continued last week when an imprisoned man walked free after charges he pleaded guilty to were dismissed in Carlton County District Court Friday.

All charges stemming from a December 2016 case of second-degree assault against Clarence Manuel Lozoya Jr. were dismissed after the Carlton County attorney's office determined that former CPD officer Scott Beckman — who lied under oath on an unrelated search warrant application in February 2016 — was a critical witness in the Lozoya case.

County attorney Lauri Ketola said the dismissal was a result of "prior failure to

properly serve notice to defense on Brady/Giglio issues," referring to two different U.S. Supreme Court cases that require prosecuting attorneys to tell the defense of any information which could exonerate a defendant of guilt, including misconduct findings involving law enforcement officers.

In Beckman's case, he was disciplined for lying on the search warrant application in 2016. He was also disciplined in 2012, after pleading guilty to a criminal case in St. Louis County. He didn't stop after being rear-ended following a concert at Fortune Bay Casino, and told two different stories to two different officers who contacted him



“This all could have been prevented if the council and mayor would have terminated Officer Beckman when it was recommended. From that moment on, he was compromised as a witness.”

~ Carlton County Attorney
Lauri Ketola

after the accident. Then led by police chief Wade Lamirande, the CPD conducted an internal investigation after the criminal case was finished and found that Beckman had violated five different department rules of conduct, including unbecoming conduct, violation of rules, immoral conduct, use of alcohol off duty and conformance to laws.

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City drama

Former chief asks council to investigate one of their own

Jana Peterson
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After two years of attempting to get results through official channels, former Cloquet police chief Wade Lamirande finally just decided to let the world know of his concerns.

Early last week, Lamirande dropped a series of complaints on city councilors, the mayor, city staff and media, detailing eight issues each with Cloquet City councilor Steve Langley and Cloquet police chief Jeff Palmer.

The Pine Knot News explored the allegations against Langley for this story, utilizing records of the investigations regarding Lamirande and Langley, and by verifying other information contained in Lamirande's complaints to the city. Lamirande retired in 2014 after 24 years with the Cloquet police department and Langley has been Ward 5 City Councilor since 2013.

According to the former police chief, Langley has harassed him, mischaracterized two different encounters with Lamirande by claiming they were criminal behavior, and behaved in a manner contrary to city code on more than one occasion. In his complaint, Lamirande also said Langley and other city officials have contacted his employer as well as the employers of several other people who were critical of the city or the police department.

Langley v. Lamirande

According to statements from both men to Grand Rapids police sergeant Robert Stein, the problems started on Dec. 31,

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Lamirande



Langley

Yep, there's been a lot of snow this month

Mike Creger
Pine Knot News

"Extreme" would be the proper term for the 2019 side of winter so far. More than 20 inches of snow in the first two weeks of February came on the heels of a polar plunge of minus-20s temperatures at the end of January.

Meteorologist William Leatham at the National Weather Service in Duluth said the total snowfall there, 26.5 inches, is a record for the first two weeks of February. The former mark was 24.6 inches in 1939.

Snow totals across Carlton County vary, but mirror the official measurements taken in Duluth.

"I don't know if 'lucky' would be the right term, but we've been hit by a series of storm tracks," Leatham said.

The snowfall recorded in Duluth so far this month is more than half of the normal snowfall for all of December, January and February, Leatham said. Those months normally bring just under 50 inches of snow.

The latest snowfall on Tuesday brought nearly five more inches to the region. While homeowners wonder where to put all the snow, city crews in Cloquet keep plugging along.

"It's part of the job," said Tim Johnson, assistant public works director. He



No parking in a snowbank. The day after 5 inches of snow fell, city crews were still cleaning up the piles plowed to the side of Broadway Avenue by the Common Ground coffee shop in the early hours Wednesday. With a break in the snow expected next week, city crews plan to continue cleaning up the excess snow piles. Jana Peterson / Pine Knot News

said crews are working a lot of overtime and keeping the main streets clear. The goal is to plow curb to curb, he said, but some side streets tend to narrow. With a break in the snow expected

next week, crews will work to shore up all the streets, Johnson said, which will include removing snow that hinders sightlines. He urged patience and appreciation for the efforts from his staff.

"It's a lot of work," he said.

The nearly 5 inches of snow recorded across the county Tuesday into Wednesday was added to more than a foot that fell last

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