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# Officer suspended, faces charges

## Conduct of police in investigation questioned

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### **WARREN, WEST BROOKFIELD**

WARREN — A West Brookfield police officer has been suspended and faces an assault and battery charge in connection with an alleged domestic incident in Warren.

Officer Harold A. Parker, 50, is scheduled to be arraigned at 9 a.m. Wednesday at Central District Court in Worcester after a woman with whom he had been living alleged he had "slammed her against the wall" on Sept. 3 after she asked him to move out of her Brimfield Road home.

According to court documents, a Warren police officer urged the court not to issue a criminal complaint against Officer Parker.

As a result, the Warren police chief intervened and wrote the court.

Chief Bruce D. Spiewakowski described the effort not to pursue a criminal complaint, by one or more of the town's police officers, as a "mistake."

"Due to the unfamiliarity of the procedures of your court, the victim was not requested to appear to give testimony," the chief wrote the court.

Court records in Central District Court indicate a Warren police officer did not tell the alleged victim about an Oct. 22

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probable cause hearing. The woman had called the Warren Police Department on Sept. 3 to report that a police officer had assaulted her.

Had she known about the hearing she could have described her version of events to the court.

The chief's letter to the court said failure to inform the victim was because of the officer's "unfamiliarity" with court procedures.

The court records in the case also indicated an unnamed Warren policeman who investigated the allegation urged the district court not to issue charges — despite a Worcester clerk-magistrate having found probable cause to proceed with a criminal case.

"Assistant Clerk Magistrate Paul Johnson found probable cause and inquired as to what the wishes of the police department were. Our officer mistakenly indicated that we did not wish to have the complaint issued," Chief Spiewakowski wrote in his Oct. 22 letter.

The chief concluded the letter saying, "The victim in this case ... had contacted me prior to the hearing and I have personally met with her. (She) has a strong desire to see this complaint move forward. I am respectfully requesting that the court issue the complaint against Harold A. Parker for assault and battery."

As a result of the chief's letter, the court — which on Oct. 22 said "complaint denied (because of) request of complainant" — reversed itself and issued a complaint against Officer Parker.

West Brookfield town officials have confirmed that Officer Parker has been on paid administrative leave since the incident.

The most recent annual town report shows Officer Parker's wages at \$68,376.

The Warren police summons report lists Officer Parker's marital status as married. He is not married to the alleged victim.

A temporary restraining order was issued early last week ordering Officer Parker to stay away from the alleged victim. He was also ordered to surrender all firearms to West Brookfield police. He moved out of the house he had been sharing with the woman.

Although the case was initially filed at the Western Wor-

cester District Court in East Brookfield, a judge ordered the case moved to Central District Court in Worcester to avoid any appearance of a conflict. West Brookfield and Warren police matters are handled at the East Brookfield courthouse.

West Brookfield Police Chief Thomas O'Donnell said last week he was notified almost immediately of the Sept. 3 incident by Sgt. Charles H. Laperle of his department.

According to a statement the alleged victim gave to Chief Spiewakowski on Sept. 6, Officer Parker was on the phone with Sgt. Laperle right after the alleged assault.

In the police report, the woman told police that just before the alleged assault, she took a handful of his clothes and threw them into the yard. Officer Parker did not want to leave and she said he grabbed her "with both hands and shoved me against the wall" and stated "that was a (expletive) mistake."

The Warren police report on the incident indicated the disagreement was touched off when the pair argued over Officer Parker discovering emails that the woman had sent to another man.

"When confronted about the emails by Harold, (she) became angry and told Harold to leave."

Warren police were called back to the home the same night and the alleged victim told police she wanted to file charges against Officer Parker, but the Warren police report adds, "She refused cooperation at this time."

She indicated to Warren police she would take up the matter with the West Brookfield police chief. Chief O'Donnell declined to comment on that topic.

Officer Parker, who now lives in Hoosick Falls, N.Y., joined the West Brookfield force in 1996 and has been a full-time patrolman since 1999.

He was suspended from the force for four months in 2002 after it was determined that he had failed to include information in a written report on a party held by teen-agers the previous October. One of the youths at the event, a minor, received a broken finger while being subdued by police, the chief said, and that injury was not noted in Officer Parker's report.

Officer Parker could not be reached for comment.