

New Details Emerge In Tollefson Investigation

Just one day after her termination was confirmed, longtime Hiawatha Police Sergeant Laura Tollefson will not face prosecution by the Kansas Attorney General's Office(Play Audio :08 seconds)

That's Jeff Wagaman, spokesman for Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt.

The investigation, conducted solely by the Hiawatha Police Department, has been undergoing review by the A.G.'s Office.

A letter, outlining the findings of the Attorney General's office, states that the decision to not prosecute was based on two key factors: the probability of conviction and the availability of other civil remedies, such as internal sanctions.

The letter further states that the investigation pertains to a matter involving procedures pertaining to a domestic violence call. However, details of that incident are not specified. The letter does state that Tollefson's actions on December 11th of last year, in reference to the call, appear to be in violation. However, there are no criminal provisions connected to the related state statute.

The letter is clear that the findings by the A.G.'s office in no way affect civil remedies to the issue, including action by the City of Hiawatha. Additionally, the letter states that the case has now been referred to Eric Williams, with the Kansas Commission On Peace Officers' Standards and Training.

This latest development in the ongoing matter involving Tollefson comes one day after Hiawatha City Administrator Lynne Ladner confirmed that Tollefson was terminated May 11th, and just five days ahead of a likely grievance hearing requested by the 20-year police force member.

Tollefson's termination, confirmed Tuesday by Ladner, followed a lengthy stretch of administrative leave, which began March 22nd.

The grievance hearing is tentatively set for Monday, the next regularly scheduled City Commission meeting.

At that time, during a closed door executive session, Tollefson would make her case as to why the City Administrator's decision to terminate was wrong. The Commission, after hearing the case, would have the opportunity to overturn Ladner's decision, if they find reason to do so.

Earlier this week, Tollefson sent an email to a number of recipients, seeking their support, and asking that they contact the city's governing body with letters of support.

She states, in the letter, that she had been offered the opportunity to resign, but declined because the termination was not justified or fair.

Tollefson served the Hiawatha Police Department for 20 years, beginning her duties in May of 1992.