

SOUTH METRO

Belle Plaine cop faces 2nd DWI

Bryan M. Pasek was off-duty, allegedly going 96 mph when stopped. State Patrol stopped him.

By Paul Walsh (<https://www.startribune.com/paul-walsh/6134706/>) Star Tribune |

NOVEMBER 21, 2012 — 7:14PM

An off-duty Belle Plaine police officer is on indefinite leave from the force after being accused Tuesday of drunken driving for the second time in less than 10 years.

Officer Bryan M. Pasek, 32, was traveling 96 miles per hour in a pickup truck when a state trooper stopped him shortly before 2:30 a.m. on southbound Hwy. 169 between Jordan and Belle Plaine, according to the State Patrol.

Pasek was previously arrested on suspicion of drunken driving in 2003 and charged with a gross misdemeanor. He accepted a deal to plead guilty to a misdemeanor and avoided potential discipline from the state's licensing board for peace officers.

A test taken Tuesday at the Shakopee Police Department measured Pasek's blood-alcohol content at 0.17 percent, Patrol Lt. Eric Roeske said. That's more than twice the legal limit for driving in Minnesota.

Pasek was booked into the Scott County jail on suspicion of third-degree drunken driving, a gross misdemeanor. He posted bond and was released later Tuesday. Reached at home Wednesday, the 10-year veteran of the department declined to discuss his arrest.

Belle Plaine City Administrator David Murphy would not say whether the officer is still being paid during his leave. Chief of Police Tom Stolee was not available for comment Wednesday.

Murphy said in a statement that the city will deal with the case "in accordance with the applicable [labor union] contract, the city's employee personnel handbook, and the policies and procedures of the Police Department."

The department's policy manual says officers can be placed on paid disciplinary leave as a result of "being arrested for, or charged with, a criminal offense which would erode public confidence in the department."

Murphy said that termination is "one of the possible outcomes" if Pasek is convicted of gross-misdemeanor drunken driving.

In the previous case, Pasek pleaded guilty in February 2004 to fourth-degree drunken driving, a misdemeanor. He had been found in his car at a stop sign in Ring Lake Township on Oct. 5, 2003, leaning forward with his head on the steering wheel, according to a criminal complaint. His blood-alcohol level was 0.20 percent, the

complaint said.

His sentence included a \$1,025 fine and 100 hours of community service. He also was suspended from work without pay for three days.

Pasek's personnel file with Belle Plaine contains one other reprimand, for insubordination, according to information supplied by the city. It was issued in March 2006 after he failed to fill out daily activity logs, as he'd been ordered.

State regulations do not speak specifically to drunken-driving allegations and the disciplining of peace officers, said Paul Monteen, standards coordinator for the Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training.

However, an officer convicted of any gross misdemeanor is required to appear before the board's complaint committee and is subject to discipline, Monteen said. That is not the case for misdemeanor convictions. A felony conviction means the automatic loss of license.

Peter Ivy, the Carver County prosecutor who handled Pasek's earlier case for Scott County officials, said that in 2004 that he offered Pasek the deal to plead to a lesser charge because he didn't want to see one big mistake ruin the officer's career.

Ivy added that Pasek should be careful to never again drive drunk, saying, "If he ever did something like this again, I would have no sympathy."

Staff writer Pat Pheifer contributed to this report. Paul Walsh • 612-673-4482

Paul Walsh is a general assignment reporter at the Star Tribune. He wants your news tips, especially in and near Minnesota.

paul.walsh@startribune.com

612-673-4482

walshpj