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# Stearns Co. deputy's trial moved again; Meemk leave

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Written by David Unze

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The criminal sexual conduct trial of Stearns County Sheriff's Sgt. Phil Meemken will be delayed yet again, this time because of a murder trial in Anoka County that has forced the prosecutor to ask for a continuance.

The delay happens as Meemken this month marks two years since being placed on administrative leave because of the allegations. His trial now will start in either April or May.

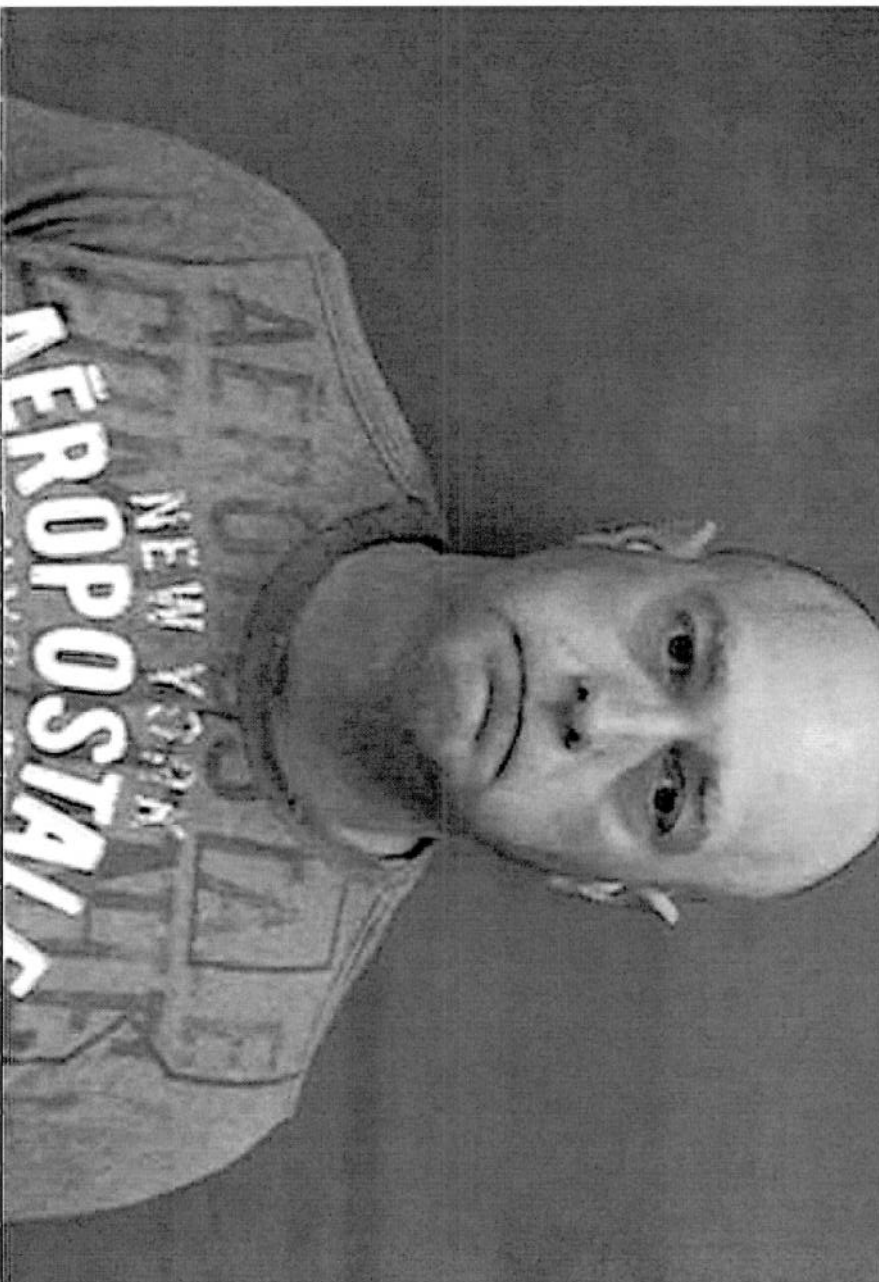
Anoka County is prosecuting the case to avoid a conflict of interest in having Stearns County prosecute one of its own deputies. After Anoka took over the prosecution, the trial was moved from Stearns because of pretrial publicity, and Anoka County also became the venue for the trial.

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Phil Meemken

being prosecuted by Assistant Anoka County Attorney Wade Kish, who also is prosecuting Meemken.

Meemken originally was scheduled to stand trial Oct. 3. The trial was moved to Anoka County after Stearns County District Court Judge Vicki Landwehr determined that Meemken likely couldn't get a fair trial in St. Cloud because of pretrial publicity.

The availability of witnesses for the October trial was cited as a reason to change that trial date.

Meemken remains on paid administrative leave from the sheriff's office while the charges are pending. He has been on paid leave since Dec. 10, 2009.

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\$35.55 an hour to \$37.33 an hour.

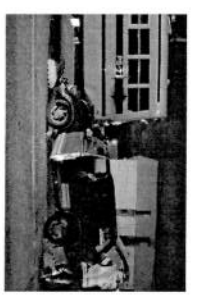
Part of the pay he has received from the county while on leave is \$2,360 in uniform allowance money that deputies receive to buy new uniforms or maintain the ones they have. That pay, required under terms of the collective bargaining agreement between the law enforcement union and the county, doesn't require proof from the deputy that the money actually is spent on uniforms.

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