



NEWS

TRIAL ORDERED IN 1 ANTIOCH POLICE FIRING

By Steve Toloken

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A federal judge has ruled against two former Antioch police officers who alleged that the police chief disciplined them as a political reprisal, but the judge ordered a trial for a similar case brought by a police dispatcher.

Police Chief Charles Miller fired dispatcher Susan Nitschneider two years ago after a hidden camera recorded her and another officer, Michael Culat, kissing and fondling.

AD



Miller said he fired her for that, but Nitschneider filed a suit alleging she was fired because Miller thought she supported then-Mayor Robert Wilton. Wilton was a political opponent of Miller and had tried unsuccessfully to fire Miller.

Judge Marvin E. Aspen ordered that case to trial. No date has been set.

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Aspen, however, dismissed similar charges brought in the same civil suit by Lt. Thomas Fisher and Culat. Both officers alleged that Miller disciplined them because they were allied with Wilton.

But in his ruling in May, the judge found it was within Miller's authority to discipline Lt. Fisher for openly supporting Wilton.

The judge said that because Fisher was second in command in the department, his political loyalties took precedence over his 1st Amendment right to take part in political life.

In Culat's case, the judge said that it was all right for Miller to fire Culat because the officer was conducting investigations and reporting to the mayor, instead of the police chief.

That broke the bond of trust that must exist between police officers, and consequently, Miller was within his rights to fire Culat, Aspen ruled.

Culat had been investigating allegations of missing guns in the department and working with Wilton to try to get the Lake County state's attorney's office to investigate that charge. That office declined to investigate, and a subsequent Illinois State Police investigation turned up no evidence of wrongdoing.

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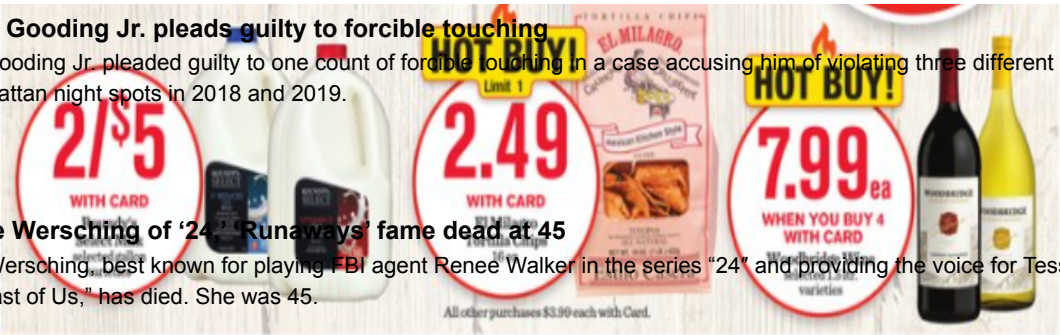
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Actor Cuba Gooding Jr. pleaded guilty to one count of forcible touching in a case accusing him of violating three different women at various Manhattan night spots in 2018 and 2019.

Chicago Tribune



Actor Annie Wersching of ‘24’ ‘Runaways’ fame dead at 45

Actor Annie Wersching, best known for playing FBI agent Renee Walker in the series “24” and providing the voice for Tess in the video game “The Last of Us,” has died. She was 45.

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