

Cst. Parsons to learn next month if charges upheld

By CARMELA FRAGOMENI
The question of whether Constable Gary Parsons was in neglect of duty when he failed to meet quotas for laying charges will remain for another month.
Lawyers for both sides made their final summations when the hearing resumed Friday at the Burlington police station. Halton Regional Police Superintendent James Currie, the hearing officer, will make a written decision on March 4.
If found guilty, Mr. Parsons, 41, a 13-year veteran of the Halton force, could be fired from his job.
Prosecutor Bill Dunlop argued Mr. Parsons, with the Burlington detachment, was notified well in advance that failure to achieve the

goals given him would be considered neglect of duty. He said Mr. Parsons at first accepted the goals as realistic.
Mr. Parsons' lawyer Fred Leitch disagreed. "Look at the circumstances. His supervisor calls him in and shows him these goals for the first time. What's he supposed to say?" asked Mr. Leitch.
Mr. Leitch said it was only natural for Mr. Parsons to later think more seriously about the goals, consult with colleagues and friends, and take a position.
Mr. Parsons eventually told his supervisor he did not view the failure to follow the order and its goals as a neglect of duty. Instead, Mr. Parsons considered the order a

setting of quotas, and he did not want to involve himself in a system that was contrary to the public interest.
Mr. Parsons was given an order in April 1985 that for every four shifts, he was to produce five Highway Traffic Act tickets, four parking tickets, and hand out four warnings to motorists. Each month he also had to lay four charges under the criminal code, three under the Liquor Licence Act, and five on the radar work under the Highway Traffic Act.
The order, from Staff Sergeant David Garlick, his superior in Burlington, was to be in effect for a year until April 1986, when they would be reviewed.

But his superiors have testified that Mr. Parsons failed to meet the order as the year went by.
If Mr. Parsons couldn't meet his goals he was supposed to let Mr. Garlick know in writing, said Mr. Dunlop.
"It is significant that there is no evidence whatsoever that Constable Parsons ever advised anyone in writing about his inability to meet the order," said Mr. Dunlop.
"Even in this proceeding, Constable Parsons did not give evidence explaining why, and I think that's significant," said Mr. Dunlop. "He clearly didn't accomplish what was assigned to him. He never submitted any explanation as to why he

couldn't meet them. We have no evidence as to why he didn't achieve them and that in itself is neglect of duty. He was invited on a number of occasions to explain, and he didn't do that."
Mr. Dunlop also pointed to a 1983 memo from Mr. Parsons which he said clearly suggests an understanding of setting goals and objectives in policing. This system, Mr. Dunlop said, allows a police force to identify non-performers so it can work with them to get them back on track.
The force provides additional training, counselling and increases supervision, he said. Disciplinary action is only taken as a last resort, he added.

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