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Deputy gets community service over assault case

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A former sheriff's deputy accused of using excessive force during a traffic stop last year in West Ashley can avoid a criminal conviction if he does some community service. Christopher Davis, who resigned from the Charleston County Sheriff's Office this spring, must volunteer 50 hours of his time and provide a magistrate with documentation of his "medical status" within the next 90 days, according to the agreement.

The document does not specify what kind of treatment Davis was supposed to seek.

If the 27-year-old fulfills the obligations, his charge of third-degree assault and battery will be dismissed.

Magistrate Bonnie Koontz signed the document May 31. The Post and Courier obtained it Tuesday.

Davis was arrested earlier this year after an investigation by the State Law Enforcement Division revealed that he roughed up motorist Devante Antwan Pittman on Nov. 11.

During that confrontation, Pittman was arrested on the same charge that Davis eventually faced.

Pittman's attorney, Lionel Lofton of Daniel Island, said Tuesday that he "fully expects the charges against Pittman to be dismissed."

Pittman, now 20, did not have an arrest history before the run-in.

A video from a sheriff's cruiser depicted the traffic stop off Orleans Road, the street where Pittman lives. Deputies said Pittman was stopped for not using a turn signal.

The camera footage showed Davis reaching into Pittman's Dodge Charger with a flashlight in his hand. Pittman told authorities that Davis started hitting him with the flashlight for no reason.

Davis and his attorney, Andy Savage of Charleston, maintained that Pittman first grabbed the deputy, so the lawman fought back in self-defense.

Deputies pulled Pittman from the car. As the motorist keeled over, Davis delivered several uppercut punches to his face, and Pittman said he lost a tooth.

Davis left his post as a patrol deputy in April, two years after he was sworn in.

As part of an agreement in a civil lawsuit that Pittman filed against him and the Sheriff's Office, the county paid \$250,000 in damages for the pain Pittman said he suffered and the medical bills he incurred. Savage had raised questions about how the civil suit was settled, saying the lines between the civil and criminal cases were "blurred."

But in the criminal case, Savage and Lofton worked out the deal with investigators and prosecutors on the day Davis was set to have a trial in front of a magistrate.

"In the end ... no harm, no foul," Savage said. "As to the criminal case, I feel there was favorable resolution."

The document stated that Pittman had also agreed with the deal.

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