

**News Release to All Residents of the Village of Stickney**

The attached Press Release was hand delivered to Mr. Ken Manson, Regional Editor of the Life Newspaper on June 17, 2002.

Since the Life Newspaper did not print our attached Press Release in its entirety relating to the allegations made against the Village of Stickney and Chief Zitek by former Stickney police officer, Rich Hare, we have taken it upon ourselves to deliver the complete statement to our village residents.

Mayor Don Tabor & All Village Trustees

# VILLAGE OF STICKNEY

COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

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To: Mr. Ken Manson  
Regional Editor  
Life Newspapers

June 17, 2002

The case recently filed by former Stickney police officer Richie A. Hare, Sr. against Police Chief John Zitek, the Village of Stickney Police Department, the Village of Stickney, and three investigators with the Cook County Sheriff's Department is completely without merit and will be vigorously defended. The lawsuit filed by Mr. Hare states that he is a "victim of retaliation by the defendants" for speaking out against alleged corruption in the Stickney Police Department and the Village of Stickney. As indicated below, and as will be proven in a court of law, the facts establish that Mr. Hare's lawsuit has no merit whatsoever on any count.

First, Mr. Hare alleges that he conducted a preliminary and final audit that revealed that narcotics, money, and drugs were missing from the evidence room. The only audit report submitted and signed, by Mr. Hare is also signed by Captain Elias, and states that no discrepancies existed and no items were unaccounted for in the evidence room.

Second, Mr. Hare suggests in the lawsuit that compensating off duty Stickney police officers for services provided for security, traffic control, and parking enforcement purposes is somehow inappropriate. This practice is, however, completely lawful, and a common way for police officers to supplement their income while providing further service to the community. In fact, Mr. Hare received substantial sums for performing these services.

Third, Mr. Hare asserts that Chief Zitek refused to terminate a radio dispatcher who engaged in improper conduct. The truth of the matter is that Chief Zitek declined to terminate the dispatcher until he conducted an investigation of the matter. When the investigation was complete, approximately one week later, Chief Zitek requested and received the resignation of the dispatcher.

Fourth, Mr. Hare alleges that there was corruption in the police department, including money stolen from parking ticket fines, prostitution sting arrests, cannabis ordinance fines, and fingerprint money from IRS applicants. Despite Mr. Hare's "allegations," there has never been any evidence and no evidence exists that any money has been stolen from the police department by any of the current officials of the Village. The lack of evidence is a direct result of the fact that no such actions have occurred. Indeed, the ongoing investigation by the State's Attorney does not include any alleged wrongdoing in the police department. That investigation has uncovered improper actions only on the part of the former Treasurer of the Village, Dora Madsen, who mishandled the books of the Village (and was immediately requested to resign when the Village became aware of those activities).

Fifth, Mr. Hare maintains that Chief Zitek encouraged a female victim of an attempted abduction and sexual assault to file a sexual assault complaint against Mr. Hare. This allegation is both ridiculous and patently false. Chief Zitek emphatically denies that he ever met or talked to that victim.

Sixth, Mr. Hare alleges that the Village failed to provide Mr. Hare with legal representation prior to his grand jury testimony while providing all other Stickney police officers with representation. The simple fact is that the Village provided those officers who requested counsel with legal representation. Mr. Hare never requested such legal representation, and in fact did not inform the Village that he was testifying before the grand jury until after he testified.

Seventh, Mr. Hare contends that the Village attempted to stop the Stickney Pension Board from paying Mr. Hare disability pension benefits. This is likewise incorrect. The Village only asked that it be permitted to participate in the hearing conducted by the Pension Board with respect to Mr. Hare's application for a duty related disability pension. The Village was denied that permission and has, in the manner provided by law, sought judicial review of the Board's decision to grant Mr. Hare a full duty related disability pension. The fact of the matter is that Mr. Hare was awarded a full duty related disability pension by the Pension Board effective September 17, 2001, and has little to complain about. Even more significantly, Mr. Hare is no longer working for the Stickney Police Department because he has a self-admitted psychological disability, not because the Village has "retaliated" against him.

Eighth, Mr. Hare alleges that the Village has retaliated against members of the Pension Board and of the police department who have voiced support for Mr. Hare. This vague and baseless allegation is again both ludicrous and false.

As the above facts demonstrate, the only retaliation that has occurred is Mr. Hare's misguided attempt to punish the Village with this lawsuit. The only case Mr. Hare has against the Village is a severe case of sour grapes.

Mayor, Donald J. Tabor & All Village Trustees