



## Sentencing for ex-Canton police officer facing sex charge continued

*Posted: Dec 12, 2012 10:02 AM PST*

*Updated: Dec 12, 2012 10:07 AM PST*

By DON O'BRIEN  
Herald-Whig Staff Writer

A former member of the Canton, Mo., Police Department facing sexual abuse charges in Adams County had his sentencing continued for a second time on Wednesday.

Jamie T. Bell, 25, was admonished by Judge William Mays for not having a sex offender evaluation done, which Bell was asked to do at his last hearing on Oct. 17. Bell pleaded guilty to a Class 2 felony charge of aggravated criminal sexual abuse of a victim between the ages of 13 and 16 on Aug. 21. He is facing a sentencing cap of five years in the Illinois Department of Corrections as part of his plea agreement. Bell is eligible for probation.

Bell's attorney, Public Defender Todd Nelson, told Mays that Bell claimed he had regularly called Dr. Keir Goatley, supervisor of Midwest Clinical Counseling, to set up an appointment but was told there were no openings. Goatley's office is based in Springfield, but he has a Quincy office as well.

Probation Officer Laura Hessling said she spoke Tuesday with Goatley, who told her that his office had never heard from Bell.

First Assistant State's Attorney Gary Farha told Mays that the state wouldn't object to having the sentencing continued, but he asked that Bell be lodged in the Adams County Jail until the sentencing could be completed.

"He has done nothing," Farha said. "The Probation Department is not recommending probation in this case. I think Mr. Bell is in denial. I don't think the community is safe (with Bell free)."

Nelson argued that Bell didn't provide any threat to the community and asked for a continuance.

Mays told Bell that he wasn't going to send him back to jail and set a hearing for Jan. 8. He said Bell must have proof of an appointment made with Midwest Clinical Counseling at that hearing, and if he doesn't, he would revoke Bell's bond and place him in jail.

Bell was arrested on Feb. 22 and his bond was initially set at \$50,000. He had his bond reduced to \$20,000 on March 2 and posted \$2,000 bond on March 5.

"I don't like your reasons (for not setting up the appointment)," Mays said. "You are not taking responsibility for what happened. If you don't get this taken care of, I know what I am going to do as far as your sentencing goes."

Bell worked for the Canton Police Department as an officer from Feb. 10, 2010 through Sept. 20, 2011. According to the statement of facts Farha gave at Bell's plea hearing in August, Bell invited three juvenile females to camp with him at a location near Marblehead on May 29, 2011. He admitted to having sex with a 16-year-old victim. Two other people, Farha said, saw Bell in bed with the victim.

The Lewis County Sheriff's Department launched an investigation after the victim reported the incident in September 2011. The Adams County Sheriff's Department conducted its own investigation.

Farha said that Bell told an investigator from the Adams County Sheriff's Department, "Like I said, I know I'm screwed."

Bell has been free since posting bond in March. He now lives in Moberly, Mo., and works as a warehouse associate at UTI Integrated Logistics in Moberly.

-- [dobrien@whig.com](mailto:dobrien@whig.com)/221-3370