

Airport Police chief gets probation in grand theft case



Tony Walker

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PANAMA CITY — The former chief of police at the airport won't serve time for stealing weapons from the Bay County Sheriff's Office evidence control room, but he'll never work as a cop again either. Tony Walker, 44, pleaded no contest to grand theft, dealing in stolen property and tampering with evidence Monday. Judge Michael Overstreet sentenced Walker to five years probation and ordered him to surrender his law enforcement certification. Overstreet withheld adjudication of guilty due to Walker's lack of a criminal record and the surrender of his license, according to the State Attorney's Office.

According to a BCSO investigative report:

Walker was arrested in May after investigators with the BCSO learned he had sold several firearms that had been held by the BCSO as evidence in criminal cases at a Lynn Haven pawn shop. Investigators became suspicious after Walker told them the guns had been given to him years earlier by his uncle, who might have purchased the weapons from a dealer who purchased them from the Sheriff's Office.

Investigators learned the uncle Walker said had given him the guns had actually died while the weapons were still in the evidence control room, and that none of the weapons at the pawn shop had been sold to dealers. Walker had filed documents indicating that several of the guns had been destroyed when they were no longer needed as evidence.

One of the guns was a double barreled shotgun that was in Walker's office at the airport when investigators first interviewed him.

Surveillance footage showed him hiding the gun in the airport police department's evidence room shortly after investigators left. Walker sold another gun to a BCSO deputy for \$200 and a guitar.

Walker stole 20 guns in all, according to the State Attorney's Office. The BCSO report indicates several of the weapons were the type of low quality weapons that the sheriff's office would typically destroy when they're no longer needed as evidence.

Overstreet also ordered Walker to complete 100 hours of community service. Walker's probation will end after 30 months if he meets all the conditions.