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School janitor busted for video cameras in bathrooms



Roberteus Tampus Perez
Mugshot By LCSO

By Jeff M. Hardison © April 6, 2017 at 1:17 p.m.

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CHIEFLAND -- A 34-year-old Levy County School Board employee was arrested and booked (Wednesday) April 5 by Chiefland Police Department (CPD) Officer B. Murphy, according to records.

Roberteus "Robert" Tampus Perez of Cedar Key was arrested on two counts of video voyeurism, according to records, and his initial bond was set at \$350,000 for each of the two counts, to equal a \$700,000 total bond.

Perez was hired Sept. 9, 2010 as a school tech / lab manager and became a janitor as of July 2016, according to Levy County Assistant Superintendent of Schools Candy Dean.

On Tuesday (April 4), a staff member at Chiefland Elementary School located a suspicious electronic device in a staff restroom at the school, Levy County Sheriff's Office Lt. Scott Tummond said.

After contacting law enforcement authorities, the device was determined to be a miniature video camera, Tummond, who is the public information officer for the LCSO, said.

The camera had been concealed in a manner in which to record persons using the toilet facilities, Tummond said.

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CPD Sgt. James Yanok speaks to the press, including two broadcast journalists from Gainesville, on Thursday afternoon (April 6).

* During a press conference at 2:30 p.m. CPD Sgt. James Yanok said CPD Officer Blake Murphy had first responded when contacted about the camera.



LCSO School Resource Officer Chase Gregory joined Murphy in the initial investigation. The camera had been located after it was concealed in a fake plant with camouflage tape, Yanok said.

Images of Perez on the data storage card showed him setting up the camera in the bathroom, Yanok said. Perez confessed to placing five cameras in two staff bathrooms approximately 10 times since 2016, Sgt. Yanok said.

Additional charges may be pending against Perez, Yanok said. The investigation is ongoing.

Investigators realized that a similar incident had been reported during the 2016 school year. That previous camera was found on May 16, 2016, according to records.

School personnel located a camera in 2016. Until this second case where investigators followed clues to charge Perez, that other camera was not linked to a suspect.

Investigators quickly identified Perez as a suspect after finding the second camera. The officers were able to develop probable cause to arrest Perez for two counts of video voyeurism as a result, according to records.

Investigators have executed a search warrant at Perez's residence as well, Tummond said.

A number of items containing potential evidence were recovered during the search.

Those items will take a significant amount of time to review, Tummond said. Additionally, law enforcement officers have thoroughly searched all of the restrooms at CES and did not discover any additional cameras.

Investigators determined Perez targeted staff bathrooms to set up his video equipment. No credible evidence has been uncovered that any children were targeted for videoing by Perez at this point in the investigation, Tummond said.

Perez has been placed on leave without pay and due process procedures are being followed for his termination from employment with the Levy County School Board, according to records.

Tummond said the investigators do not yet know the identities or the number of potential victims who may have been recorded during these criminal acts.

Levy County Superintendent of Schools Jeff Edison has spoken personally to Eighth Judicial Circuit State Attorney William Cervone about these cases.

State Attorney Cervone told HardisonInk.com that he has assured Edison that the State Attorney's Office will take every step possible within the law to protect the identities of all of the victims.

The Levy County School Board will continue to cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies and the State Attorney's Office, according to information provided by the School Board.