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Fire Chief Cited For Drinking On-Duty

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Pennsylvania - Port Vue's fire chief was ordered to stand summary trial on charges of public drunkenness stemming from his alleged actions during a blaze near the fire hall. Police said Cash Cortazzo, 24, was sent a summons to appear before Magisterial District Judge Armand Martin on Nov. 18 at 8:30 a.m. Police said the fire occurred on Sept. 17 around 4:45 a.m. in a vacant house along Tacoma Avenue, two doors from Vigilant Hose Co. No. 1.

"Our officer Christopher Adams did cite him for public drunkenness on the scene of the fire," Chief Bryan R. Myers said on Wednesday.

Cortazzo declined comment.

The fire was quickly extinguished by Vigilant Hose volunteers with help from Liberty and Lincoln fire departments. Myers said damage was minor and the Allegheny County Fire Marshal's office was called to investigate the cause.

The fire marshal's office did not return calls requesting a report on the investigation.

According to court records, charges were filed on Sept. 27. The summons was issued on Oct. 3 and Cortazzo acknowledged receiving it on Tuesday.

On June 27, Cortazzo was found not guilty in a Pittsburgh court of public urination charges from a Jan. 27 incident.

On Sept. 5 he waived a preliminary hearing before Magisterial District Judge Valarie Costanzo in Cecil Township, Washington County, on charges of driving under the influence.

The charges filed by township police on July 16 allege general impairment and a blood alcohol count of more than twice the legal limit of .08.

Cortazzo waived his right to have counsel appear with him before Costanzo and was freed on an unsecured bond of \$2,500.

Written by Tribune Review

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