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Lawyer: Nassau cop was arrested for 'driving while black'

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A Nassau County cop who **accused fellow officers of racial bias** when she was arrested off-duty had her first court appearance Thursday and pleaded not guilty to charges, which included resisting arrest, harassment and having tinted windows, **court records show**.

The 52-year-old officer, Dolores Sharpe, appeared Jan. 9 before Judge Douglas Lerose at Nassau First District Court in Hempstead. Dozens of supporters packed the courtroom as the 19-year police veteran entered a not guilty plea and was released without bail.

Her attorney, Frederick Brewington, accused police and prosecutors of failing to notify his client about the harassment charge and the traffic summons. "Never mentioned," he said of the charges. "This is piling on."

Sharpe, he said, was only told she was charged with a misdemeanor offense of resisting arrest. Outside of the courthouse, he purported officers may have "backtracked" and added the extra charges "to cover their toochis."

"One thing is very clear; it was never presented or raised to Miss Sharpe," Brewington said while holding a copy of the harassment complaint and traffic summons.

Assistant District Attorney Theresa Tebbett said her office was "looking into" the allegation that Sharpe wasn't told about the other charges. The district attorney's office did not immediately comment to reporters after the arraignment.

Court documents obtained by Examiner.com show they were prepared and signed by the officer and a supervising lieutenant the day after Sharpe's arrest, even though she was not held overnight in police custody.

In the charging documents, the officer said Sharpe "was refusing to place her hands behind her back" and was "pulling away" from the officers when they tried to handcuff her. The arresting officer also accused Sharpe of swinging a neck chain at another cop during the incident.

At a press conference last month, Brewington said Sharpe's police identification was on a chain attached to her wrist and that an officer ripped it from her arm.

"When she showed her ID, it was on a chain," he said. He snatched it. It was snatched out of her hand so much so that it ripped from the chain."

It was unclear if police were referring to the same chain when they accused Sharpe of using it to harass the officer.

Brewington said his client denies all of the allegations posed by her fellow cops and said she was only stopped because she was "driving while black, basically."

The traffic summons presented in court Thursday ordered Sharpe to also appear at the same time as her criminal arraignment at the Nassau County Traffic and Paring Violations Agency on nearby Cooper Street in Hempstead.

"Had we not looked at these papers carefully, she would have missed another court date...there could have been other ramifications," Brewington said, noting that a judge could have potentially issued a warrant for her arrest.

Sharpe pleaded not guilty at the traffic court and demanded "an immediate trial."

She will be back in court on March 7.