



HOWARD SCHNAPP

Former Police Officer Dolores Sharpe filed a \$24 million lawsuit. ■ Video: newsday.com/nassau

COP RETIRES, SUES OVER HER ARREST

20-year veteran of Nassau force was acquitted in dispute with 2 officers

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A 20-year veteran of the Nassau County Police Department said yesterday she has retired from the force and filed a \$24 million lawsuit against the department and the county charging that she was wrongfully arrested by her colleagues two years ago.

Dolores Sharpe, 54, was off duty and shopping in West Hempstead when she was arrested on Nov. 29, 2013, following a dispute with two on-duty officers in a parking lot.

A trial jury acquitted her earlier this year of charges of harassment and resisting arrest, but she decided to retire after the department brought internal charges against her despite the acquittal, she said.

Sharpe, who is African-American, said she had witnessed and experienced instances of racism in the department in the past, but was shocked when she was arrested by the two white officers, Victor Gladitz and Charles Volpe.

"I was shocked that it got to

the point that it did and it became a physical thing and they put me in handcuffs," Sharpe said as she sat in the Hempstead office of her attorney, Frederick Brewington.

Brewington said the lawsuit was filed electronically yesterday in U.S. District Court in the Eastern District of New York because courts were closed on Veterans Day. It listed eight grounds for damages and asked for \$3 million on each, plus attorney fees and costs.

Sharpe, a Queens resident who had been assigned to the department's Applicant Investigation Unit, was suspended without pay for 30 days following her arrest, and was never given back pay for that period, she said.

The police department and the Nassau County Attorney's office declined to comment yesterday.

After her acquittal by a jury in First District Court in March, Sharpe said she was found guilty on departmental charges of conduct unbecoming an officer because she

cursed at one of the arresting officers. That prompted her to retire on July 23, she said.

She and Brewington said they did not know whether Gladitz had faced department charges for cursing at Sharpe — a conversation that was recorded by Volpe on his cellphone and played at Sharpe's trial.

Brewington said the department treated Sharpe differently than it would have a white officer involved in an off-duty dispute, and the court papers said her arrest and treatment were "due to her color and race."

Volpe testified during the trial that he first saw Sharpe while investigating a traffic accident in the parking lot of a discount store in West Hempstead.

They exchanged words after Sharpe accused Volpe of blocking her from parking with his police car. Volpe testified at the trial that Sharpe said she was a police officer but at first refused to give him her ID, prompting him to believe she was impersonating a cop.

Sharpe testified that during the encounter and her subsequent arrest on the street outside the parking lot she felt "very disrespected. . . . I felt that I was being belittled."