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Women claim off-duty TPD officer used needless force

Officer's attorney says women were the aggressors

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Officer's attorney says the women were the aggressors



TUCSON, Ariz. (KGUN) – Editors Note: Viewer discretion is advised, below includes a video that is potentially sensitive and/or offensive.

The Tucson Police Department is investigating an incident involving an off-duty officer that happened in the parking of a local restaurant this month.

On November 14, an off-duty officer was involved in an incident with other individuals in the parking lot of Culinary Dropout in Tucson. According to the department, the incident included physical contact between the officer and other individuals, during which the officer took down two females and attempted to restrain them.

Three women say an off-duty Tucson Police officer used unnecessary force against them. They're laying the groundwork to sue. The officer's attorney says the women inflamed the confrontation. One of them is charged with disorderly conduct.



62 year old Michelle Aloisi and her daughters Brittney Aloisi and Nicole Whitted say on a Sunday morning, about two weeks ago, two of them ended up down in the parking lot of the Culinary Dropout on Grant restaurant after a driver became angry over them walking slowly across the parking area.

Michelle Aloisi says she has a leg problem that slows her down. They say the man got out of his truck, chest bumped Brittney Aloisi and took her down. Her mother Michelle tried to help.

“My instinct was to protect my child and help her and so I went behind him and I started pulling his shirt. I knew physically I wasn't going to be able to just lift him off, but I thought maybe I can get him to realize what he's doing. And then next thing you know, he grabbed the back of my hair and flipped me on top of Brittney.”

They say when they tried to call the police, the man said he is a police officer. He's Tucson Police Officer Robert Szelewski. The women say while Brittney Aloisi was down, the officer put his knee on her throat.

Mike Storie, the officer's attorney, says the man's knee was on the woman's throat for no more than an instant, and that the women approached the officer's truck, escalated the confrontation and chest bumped him.





Larry Wulkan | Zwillinger Wulkan on behalf of client

On November 14, an off-duty officer was involved in an incident with other individuals in the parking lot of Culinary Dropout in Tucson.

Storie says, “That's an assault. These things are assaults and you don't know where they go from there. Everyone has high 20-20 hindsight, oh, she would have just just bumped him and it would have been the end of it. How does he know? It's a group of people approaching him.”

Mike Storie says surveillance video from the restaurant will back up the officer’s account of what happened. The women say they did nothing to trigger the event. They want the officer off the street and their attorney is preparing to send the City of Tucson a formal demand for just that.



Tucson's Police Chief Chris Magnus released a statement Sunday, it reads:

I appreciate that the video of this incident raises concerns, but it is important that we adhere to the legal requirement of due process and allow both the criminal and administrative investigations to be completed before determinations are made and further steps taken. The department holds its members to high standards both on and off duty, and we will review this matter in light of those standards.

The department is conducting an administrative investigation regarding the incident. According to the department, "The cellphone video, other video footage, and witness statements will be considered as part of both the criminal and administrative investigations."

The Pima County Attorney's Office will also review the incident to determine whether criminal charges should be issued, which was requested by the Tucson Police Department.

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