

## **POLICE REPORT: WOMAN SAYS HOLLOWELL PAID HER \$ 60 FOR SEX**

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The **woman** involved in the prostitution case against Melvin Butch **Hollowell** told sheriff's deputies he **paid her \$ 60** to have oral **sex** .

Michelle C. Sherman, 31, of Royal Oak told members of a Wayne County Sheriff's Department surveillance squad that **Hollowell** , 44, picked **her** up in front of a doughnut shop at Woodward near 7 Mile in Detroit and drove **her** to a deadend street.

**Hollowell** has said he was trying to help a **woman** in distress.

A police report obtained by the Free Press **says** deputies ticketed the pair on misdemeanor charges shortly after the incident, confiscated his 2004 Jeep Grand Cherokee and allowed them to leave.

" It's a hearsay document. It doesn't mean that any of it is true," **Hollowell** 's lawyer, Gerald Evelyn of Detroit, said Friday. He also discounted rumors that he is negotiating a plea agreement **for Hollowell** with the Detroit Law Department, which would prosecute the city ordinance violation.

" He hasn't even been arraigned yet," Evelyn added. " Nobody has had time to negotiate."

**Hollowell** , the former chair of the Democratic Party in Michigan, resigned Friday from newly appointed posts with the John Kerry presidential campaign and the Michigan Civil Rights Commission.

The police report, filed by Deputy Derrick Anderson, **says Hollowell** told officers that he picked up the **woman** at the doughnut shop and was giving **her** a ride, but wouldn't elaborate.

Sherman, questioned separately, said she had been working as a prostitute in front of the Dutch Girl Donut Shop when **Hollowell** picked **her** up and drove about five blocks to railroad tracks at the dead end of Grixdale near John R. She said **Hollowell** had **her** undress. She said he performed oral **sex** and masturbated while fondling **her** breast. She said he gave **her** three \$ 20 bills, which she gave the deputies, the report **says** .

The incident happened around 8: 20 p. m. Tuesday, according to the report.

**Hollowell** , who lives about a mile from the location, was cited as receiving and admitting another **for** an act of prostitution, a misdemeanor that carries a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail and a \$ 500 fine. Sherman was ticketed **for** disorderly conduct **for** impeding the flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic, a misdemeanor charge often leveled against prostitutes.

They are to be arraigned at 8: 30 a. m. Tuesday in Detroit's 36th District Court.

The Wayne County Prosecutor's Office said Friday that **Hollowell** retrieved the vehicle after paying a \$ 900 penalty. State law permits officers to confiscate vehicles apparently used to commit crimes. The money cannot be refunded even if the defendant is acquitted.

When news of the arrest became public Thursday and **Hollowell** was asked **for** comment, he said he thought the **woman** was in distress and that he picked **her** up and offered to drop **her** off at the nearby 12th ( Palmer Park) Precinct. **Hollowell** said she wanted to be dropped at a house around the corner. Moments later, he said, police showed up.

" Nothing happened other than that I saw someone who needed help, and I stopped to help **her** ," **Hollowell** told the Free Press on Thursday.

The sheriff's department special operations unit was conducting surveillance in the area in response to citizens' complaints about prostitution and drug activity. The unit conducts such operations at various locations in Detroit and Highland Park, a department spokesman said.

The report **says** the area where **Hollowell** was ticketed " is a dead end street and is a location known to officers as being a location where prostitutes who work Woodward and the John R area take their johns to turn tricks." The report also said that deputies recognized Sherman as being a prostitute. Sherman could not be located Friday.

**Her** mother, Joan Throneburg, 49, of Royal Oak said Sherman got hooked on heroin a few years ago. Throneburg said **her** daughter, who was sentenced to 90 days in the Oakland County Jail in 2002 after violating the terms of **her** probation on a heroin possession charge, occasionally shows up at Throneburg's home.

" But I don't let drugs in the house," Throneburg said. " It's not fair to my neighbors or to me. . . . She can't seem to kick it and I don't know how to help **her** ." She said **her** daughter has been to rehabilitation centers at least twice but always relapses. " I don't even know where she lives," she said tearfully. " I've told **her** if she is clean, she can come home. But she can't or won't stay clean. We've been through hell."

Throneburg said Sherman grew up in Royal Oak and dropped out of Dondero High School, but later received a GED. She went to nursing school briefly before getting married.

**Her** marriage only lasted 19 months. **Her** exhusband, Robert Sherman, 35, a West Bloomfield roofer, filed **for** divorce in Oakland County in October 2002, saying **her** drug and alcohol dependencies created " a dangerous environment **for** the children."

The couple had a 5yearold son and 2yearold daughter. The ex-husband, who has custody of the children, didn't return calls.

Neighbors around the Woodward corridor said prostitution is a serious problem. Otis Buffington, 59, said it's not uncommon to find used condoms on the street in front of his home on Grixdale, east of Woodward and across from the Palmer Woods neighborhood where **Hollowell** lives.

" I don't think the police have a handle on it," he said. " You see the cars roll by off Woodward and you know what's going on."

Dutch Girl Donut Shop owner Gene Timmer added: " There is more prostitution than there used to be.... We wish the whole thing was more under control."

**Hollowell** is a lawyer and partner in Detroit's Butzel Long law firm. He issued his resignation from his unpaid position as a legal adviser with the Kerry campaign Friday. "

The campaign has accepted his resignation," said spokesman Rodell Mollineau. " Our thoughts are with him and his family during this difficult time."

**Hollowell** is married to Desiree Cooper, a Free Press columnist. They have two children.

The law firm declined to comment, saying the incident was a personal matter.

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Caption: Photo

Melvin Butch **Hollowell** , 44, was arrested with Michelle C. Sherman, 31, of Royal Oak.

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