

COACH: Victim says he was made to drink vodka until he puked

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State Police Commission's plans to send the School Board a letter, Hicks said, "I have not seen that one, so I can't comment."

"We don't take things lightly, whenever there's controversy," Hicks said.

A video recording of the State Police Commission hearing at the Hampton Inn and Suites of Monroe was published last week by Sound Off Louisiana, an online government watchdog publication operated by Robert Burns, of Baton Rouge. Burns told *The Ouachita Citizen* he began traveling around the state to record videos of various meetings and publish them online at the behest of the late C.B. Forgotston, a Louisiana political blogger.

OPSO probe of Goode incident

Deputy's reports and testimony during the State Police Commission hearing last week shed light on the incident that led to Goode's arrest for cruelty to juveniles, simple assault, and contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile.

Prior to the April 15, 2017 incident, Chandler Jones and several other Sterlington youth, including the daughter of a sheriff's deputy, were gathered at a bonfire. One of the youth reached out to Goode once they exhausted their supply of alcohol, according to testimony given last week as well as a report by sheriff's investigator Justin Cromwell. Cromwell handled the investigation.

"Dawson (Snell, who was 17 at the time) stated he ran out of alcohol to drink so (he) decided to call Jack (Goode) and asked if he had any beers that he and Chandler could drink," stated Cromwell's report. "Dawson stated that while on the phone with Jack he responded yes and invited them over."

When asked last week whether he drank any alcohol prior to arriving at Goode's house, Chandler Jones said, "No sir."

While at Goode's house, Chandler Jones claimed Goode offered him alcoholic beverages, including two beers, two alcoholic root beers, and vodka, according to sheriff's Deputy Jason Elee's April 15 report.

"Chandler stated he began to feel sick, and vomited outside of Jack's residence," stated Elee's report. "Chandler stated Jack was getting in his face calling him a ***** due to him not being able to hold his alcohol, and

stated he began to push Jack out of his face. Chandler stated Jack became irate which started the verbal altercation. Chandler stated Jack began to strike him in the face and chest with a closed fist, at which time, witnesses Dawson Snell and Chase Carter (who was 18 at the time), broke up the physical altercation."

Snell told investigators that Goode offered them several beers and repeatedly called Chandler Jones a ***** after he became sick.

Chandler Jones testified that Goode claimed he would beat him like his own father — Goode's — had never beat him before.

"He (Chandler Jones) runs outside, starts throwing up," Joseph Jones said. "Big *****, you can't handle your vodka." Chandler says something back to him, and the coach says, "I'm going to whoop you're a** like I never beat it before."

Other witnesses confirmed Chandler Jones' account, according to deputy's reports. During questioning, Snell appeared "highly intoxicated" though his remarks and the remarks of two other witnesses matched Chandler Jones' account, Elee wrote in his report.

Another witness, Jacob Bourne, who was 19 at the time, told Elee he heard Goode tell Chandler Jones, "I will kill you," while holding Chandler Jones on the ground.

When asked whether Goode's wife, Emily Goode, provided any comment at the time of his investigation, Cromwell said, "She stated she did not observe any physical contact nor did she observe any underage drinking."

Emily Goode is a teacher at Sterlington High School.

"She must not have been there then," said Floyd Falcon Jr., a Baton Rouge attorney representing Joseph Jones at the State Police Commission hearing.

Falcon's remark sparked laughs across the room.

"Or she lied," Cromwell said.

According to the account Carter provided deputies, Emily Goode was outside at Goode's house and observed the youth drinking beers with her husband, though she denied observing such activity during questioning by authorities. When Goode later confronted the youth gathered together at their bonfire, Emily Goode came to take him away, according to Carter.

"Chase (Carter) stated he believed (Goode's) only intentions was to fight them all due to him yelling, 'I'm going to beat yalls a**,'" stated Cromwell's report. "Chase stated he was finally able to get Jack into the vehicle with Emily and they left."

Like Carter, Bourne also told investigators that Emily Goode was present while the youth were gathered at Goode's house to drink and when Goode later confronted all the youth.

"Jacob stated while he was there he heard Jack yelling, 'Just wait until they turn 18 I'll kill all of them,'" stated Cromwell's report. "Jacob stated Emily was also saying, 'Yeah, just wait till they are 18 and then get 'em.'"

During questioning by deputies, Goode appeared "agitated and was extremely intoxicated," according to sheriff's Cpl. Jerry Benson's report.

"He was having trouble standing without assistance and had an intense smell of alcohol emitting from his person," stated Benson's report.

According to Cromwell's report, Goode was "slurring his speech and swaying as he stood."

"While speaking with Jack at the rear patio area of his residence, I observed several beer cans and also what appeared to be vomit on the concrete walkway in the same location," stated Cromwell's report.

Cromwell found Chandler Jones to have "several red marks, abrasion(s), and small cuts" on his face, neck, chest and back areas. Deputies took photos of Chandler Jones' injuries.

According to Cromwell, Goode admitted he fought with Chandler Jones but placed the blame on the student.

Of his 12 years in law enforcement, Cromwell told the State Police Commission he had never arrested a school teacher for providing a student with alcohol and beating that student.

Goode did not appear at the hearing last week.

"To get Goode here, we'd have to interfere with football practice," Falcon said. "Unbelievable."

When it was noted that Sterlington High School's football team was classified by the Louisiana High School Athletic Association as a "3A" team, Falcon said, of Goode, "That should be his cell number."

Felony charge dropped
Though he was charged with the felony offense of cruelty to a juvenile, Goode was ultimately convicted on a misdemeanor offense, for which he received probation.

During a July 25, 2017 court hearing before Fourth Judicial District Court Judge Fred Amman III, Goode withdrew his plea of not guilty and entered a no contest plea of guilty to simple battery, a misdemeanor. The charges of simple assault and contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile were dismissed. Assistant District Attorneys present

for the hearing were Geary Aycock and John Pham.

Aycock, who is the district attorney's chief felony prosecutor, previously signed a decline slip dropping the charge of cruelty to a juvenile. Aycock's decline slip referred the case to the misdemeanor division, which filed the simple battery charge against Goode.

Goode was sentenced to pay a \$300 fine, though his sentence was suspended and he was placed on unsupervised probation.

"A condition of probation, Defendant will not be able to seek employment at Sterlington High School nor Sterlington Jr. High School," stated the minutes from the July 25, 2017 court hearing.

Todd Guice, the personnel director for Ouachita Parish Schools, told *The Ouachita Citizen* earlier this week that Goode began work as a teacher at West Monroe High School in August 2017, prior to the beginning of the school year. In April 2017, School Board officials informed local media outlets that Goode was placed on suspension with pay, but Guice declined to elaborate on the extent of disciplinary measures in Goode's case.

Goode was still a teacher at West Monroe High, according to Guice.

Last week, attorneys and State Police Commission members expressed frustration with the outcome of Goode's case.

"We sat here today listening to this testimony, that as a father, that as a citizen of this state, I'm appalled by, as we all are," said State Police Commission member Jared Caruso-Riecke. "And this man gets a \$300 fine and is back to coaching? After the impact to that man's family?"

"I regret we don't have authority over others, not just the trooper in this case," added Simien, the commission's chairman.

Trooper Jones' actions

During the hearing last week, the State Police Commission reviewed the actions of Joseph Jones, the trooper, to determine whether he violated State Police procedures and warranted discipline of 40 hours of suspension.

"The coach beat up Chandler Jones," said Baton Rouge attorney Ron Crouch, with State Police, while stating the facts of the case. "What's at issue is the behavior of Trooper Jones at Goode's house when the sheriff's deputies are performing their investigation."

Falcon argued his client was simply acting as any father might under the circumstances. Falcon pointed out his client did not approach Goode during the April 2017 incident while wearing a State Police uniform or driving a State Police unit.

"The real crime is Mr. Goode, and he got away with a \$300 fine and a (Article) 894 after physically brutalizing this man's son," said Falcon, who pointed out Joseph Jones did not touch Goode during their interactions. "Never touched

the man, never touched the man."

Joseph Jones testified he drank about eight to 10 beers during the six to seven hours preceding the 1 a.m. incident in April 2017.

When asked about whether he felt the effect of alcohol at the time he sought out Goode, Joseph Jones said, "Maybe a little."

Joseph Jones' wife, Haley Jones, is a deputy with the Sheriff's Office. According to her April 2017 report, she learned her son, Chandler Jones, had been battered by Goode, and so she alerted her husband and the authorities.

Sheriff's Sgt. Russ Buntyn, who was off-duty at the time, informed Haley Jones that his daughter also was present at the youth's bonfire and had contacted him about Goode's battery of Chandler Jones.

Buntyn informed Haley Jones and the Sheriff's Office that he was with Joseph Jones, who wanted to speak with the coach. Buntyn told Haley Jones to "hurry" with the arrival of other deputies, because Joseph Jones was planning to speak with Goode.

When deputies questioned Goode, Joseph Jones was standing nearby and directed several remarks to Goode as well.

"I was doing what I would as a parent," said Joseph Jones. "I wanted to know what his story was. I wanted to look in his eyes and see what was his excuse."

When asked whether he would have let the father of a different victim approach Goode — had he, Joseph Jones, been the arresting officer — he said, "I wouldn't."

"I told him, 'You know who I am and what I do for a living,'" said Joseph Jones, of his remarks to Goode.

Jones admitted he offered to drop charges against Goode if Goode would take the matter outside into the field to handle the matter like men.

Jones also admitted he used profanity.

"I asked him three times did he put his hands on my kid," Joseph Jones said. "The last time I asked him, 'Did you put your hands on my ***** kid?' At that time, the deputy put him in handcuffs."

Cromwell testified last week that Joseph Jones' presence during questioning of Goode interfered with his investigation, because he normally interviewed the victims first before approaching the suspect. In the company of Joseph Jones, however, the confrontation with the suspect came first and became "awkward," Cromwell said.

"It impeded my investigation, I feel," Cromwell said.

Joseph Jones said he did not believe he did anything wrong or impeded Cromwell's investigation.

When asked what Joseph Jones' supervisor at Troop F had to say about the matter, Joseph Jones said, "He said, 'Did you put your hands on him?' No sir. 'Were you wearing police clothing?' No sir. 'Did you identify

yourself as a police officer?' No sir. 'Then I don't give a ***** what you said to him.'"

"Those were his exact words," Joseph Jones said.

During the hearing, there were references to some disciplinary measures against two of the sheriff's deputies involved in authorities' response to the April 2017 incident. Falcon claimed an official with the Sheriff's Office had falsely accused his client. Joseph Jones testified that Cromwell received a "letter of counseling," and that Buntyn, the sergeant, was demoted. Joseph Jones also testified that the shift captain — who at the time was identified in reports as Michael Judd — also was demoted.

When asked about the disciplinary measures, sheriff's Chief Deputy Marc Mashaw said, "We have no comment on personnel matters."

After other witnesses provided testimony about the incident, Reeves, the State Police superintendent — who served as commander of State Police Troop F in Monroe from 2008 to 2013 — was sworn in and testified on Joseph Jones' behalf. According to Reeves, he and other State Police officials had initially recommended 40 hours of suspension be imposed on Joseph Jones but later experienced "buyer's remorse."

"As a father, I certainly understand Trooper Jones' actions and interest as it concerns his son," Reeves said. "No doubt about it. I think Trooper Jones exerted incredible restraint, by not being physical with someone who hurt his son."

Reeves said there was a "huge conflict" with Joseph Jones' actions as a father and how those actions reflected on his role as a supervising officer.

"Time had elapsed, there was not a threat there anymore," said Reeves, of the incident involving Joseph Jones' son.

Reeves said Joseph Jones should have allowed law enforcement to do their jobs, as difficult as it may have been for Joseph Jones to simply assume the role as a complainant or victim.

"Unfortunately, I think it crossed a line here," Reeves said. "We are held to a standard, and we have to hold to our procedures."

Reeves recommended the 12 hours suspension that the State Police Commission ultimately adopted.

"I'm not saying I wouldn't have done the same thing," said State Police Sgt. Jeffrey Ross, who serves as a member of the State Police Commission. "I would hope that after finding out my son was fine, that he was safe, it wouldn't have made it easy, but I would've known the Sheriff's Office was going to handle the situation."

In light of Goode's light sentence, Joseph Jones told the State Police Commission he would have acted differently had he encountered the same situation again.

"Because he got nothing," said Joseph Jones, of Goode's charges.

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