

May 22, 2003

**Section:** City&Region

**Edition:** Final

**Page:** B1

## LEXINGTON SETTLES LAST OF SUITS ALLEGING DISCRIMINATION

ALL 3 WERE FILED AGAINST WALSH-ERA POLICE DEPARTMENT

*Louise Taylor, Herald-Leader Staff Writer*

For \$20,000, Lexington has settled the last of three lawsuits that accused the city's police department of discrimination when it was led by former Chief Larry Walsh.

Billy Richmond, a homicide detective who remains with the department but is assigned to a federal fugitive task force, alleged that Walsh condoned racial discrimination by failing to rein in his former supervisor, Lt. William Fockele. Richmond, who is half German and half African-American, said that Fockele referred to him in such demeaning terms as "chocolate trooper."

A more high-profile suit that depicted Walsh as a man who sexually preyed on females in the department settled in March for \$150,000. That suit was filed by now-retired Capt. Melinda Massarone, who claimed she was buried in the communications division because she was a woman.

Another suit, which accused the department of discriminating on the basis of gender, was tossed out of court late last year. A federal judge said that officer Shelli Jones had failed to prove she was not rehired because she was a woman, since five men who were rehired had better performance ratings than she had.

Keith Moorman, the city's attorney in the Richmond case, said the city was sure it would have won at trial, but that the cost of litigation would have exceeded the \$20,000 settlement.

Neither Richmond nor his attorney, **Robert Abell**, could be reached yesterday for comment.

- Billy Richmond said a supervisor referred to him as "chocolate trooper."

---

Copyright (c) 2003 Lexington Herald-Leader



- [News](#) |
- [Business](#) |
- [Sports](#) |
- [Entertainment](#) |