



## News Release

March 29, 2013

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### **Michael Peterson Sentenced on Assault Charge Stemming from 2011 Shooting at Hopper's Bar in Waconia**

Carver County Attorney Mark Metz announced that Michael Gregory Peterson, age 34 of Waconia, was sentenced by the Honorable Richard Perkins in Carver County District Court on March 28, 2013.

This case stems from an incident that occurred on the evening of Saturday, January 15, 2011, when Peterson was at Hopper's Bar in downtown Waconia. Peterson had a permit to carry and was carrying a small, loaded .380 pistol in his pocket. Prior to arriving at the bar with friends, Peterson was consuming alcoholic beverages while ice fishing. In addition, Mr. Peterson had taken prescribed pain medications for a pre-existing head injury.

Peterson became intoxicated and, without provocation, threw a drink into the face of another patron. An employee of the bar saw this and told Peterson to leave. Peterson resisted and was physically escorted out of the bar. Peterson told the employee: "You don't want to do this." Once outside the front door, Peterson turned so he was facing the front of the bar, drew his pistol and fired several shots back towards the employee. The employee was not shot but at least one bullet struck the brick facade near the employee. Peterson was arrested at the scene a short time later.

The Carver County Attorney's Office argued for a 36 month prison term because of the serious nature of this violent crime and the fact that a firearm was used against an innocent person who was just doing his job. The fact that the defendant was intoxicated was not an excuse.

Judge Perkins agreed that this crime was very serious and offensive to the community as well as the victim. However, Judge Perkins cited the fact that Peterson had no other criminal record, was remorseful and the Minnesota Department of Corrections finding that Peterson was amenable to probation. Judge Perkins then pronounced a 36 month sentence but stayed that prison term for 7 years on the conditions that Peterson serve 1 year in the Carver County Jail, undergo a mental health assessment, have no use of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs, remain law abiding, not possess guns or ammunition, write a letter of apology to the employee, and pay a \$3,085.00 fine.

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