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Lawyer for Rossmo offers e-mail as proof

Staff Reporter

The lawyer for a former Vancouver cop suing the department for wrongful dismissal yesterday dropped what he hopes is the bombshell that will prove his client's case.

Lawyer Murray Tevlin stood up in B.C. Supreme Court in Vancouver with what he believes is the electronic-age version of a smoking gun.

Tevlin presented an e-mail he says indicates Det. Insp. Kim Rossmo's contract termination was timed to coincide with the resignations of Rossmo's two supporters on the police board.

Rossmo, the first police officer to get a PhD from Simon Fraser University's criminology department, developed a much-lauded geographic profiling method to catch serial criminals.

He was promoted to detective-inspector, a newly created rank with a \$120,000-a-year salary, in 1995 by then-police chief Ray Canuel.

Last year he was told his five-year contract wouldn't be renewed and he could go back to being a constable, which he claims was tantamount to being fired without cause.

The e-mail was from Deputy Chief John Unger's secretary Jan English to Deputy Chief Carolin  Daley.

Mayor Phillip Owen testified that decisions made by one set of police board members would not resurface and be presented again after the make-up of the appointed board changed.

But the June 26 memo from English to Daley said the department's letter demoting Rossmo would go out the week of July 1 to coincide with the appointment of the new police board members being appointed.

Insp. Doug Lepard testified that at the time the department was in a state of financial chaos.

He said former police chief Bruce Chambers, who followed Canuel, embarked on a radical reorganization, creating squads and positions "out of thin air" without people to fill them.

Lepard said the department had been ordered to cut \$300,000 from the budget.

And when he brought the news to Chief Terry Blythe, who took over from Chambers, Rossmo's was the first position Blythe identified to be cut.

Lepard said the Sergeants Association had expressed concerns that Rossmo didn't have sufficient experience to be an inspector supervising cops in critical situations on the street.

The hearing continues today.