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Shooting suspect has long record

Man's previous charges, sentences lessened repeatedly

By Katie de la Rosa
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The 23-year-old Lafayette man arrested on charges relating to the shooting of a Lafayette police officer late Thursday has been wanted since early May for violating his probation stem-

ming from his lengthy criminal drug record, which had only briefly put him behind bars.

As of Friday night, both the wounded officer, who was shot once, and suspect Chase Chaisson, who was shot multiple times, remained hospitalized in stable condition. Chaisson will be detained on charges of attempted first-degree murder of a police officer, a convicted felon in possession of a firearm, second-degree kidnapping and injury to a police K-9 once he is



Chase Chaisson

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foot.

While searching an apartment whose tenant was believed to have information on a suspect in a shooting from the night

before, officers located Chaisson hiding in a closet. Gunfire was exchanged, and as the officer moved to safety, Chaisson jumped out a window and fled on

foot. The apartment resident, Patrick Ledet, 21, of Lafayette, was arrested and charged with principal to attempted first-degree murder and obstruction of justice.

Police later learned Chaisson was spotted at a truck stop on North University Avenue attempting to hitch a ride. Dispatched officers discovered a truck riding with its headlights off and with a passenger seemingly trying to avoid detection,

but the truck refused to pull over. With help from four other law enforcement agencies, the truck was stopped on Interstate 10 in Crowley. Chaisson was then arrested. The driver is detained and is being questioned.

Chaisson had been on the loose for four months, having violated the probation that resulted from previous drug arrests that had incarcerated him for almost no time at all.

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In February 2010, he pleaded guilty to two counts of marijuana possession and one of resisting arrest by flight, for which he received a suspended five-month sentence and 12 months probation through his plea deal. Three months later, he faced charges of distribution of cocaine and monies derived from drug transactions, but the court dismissed the latter charge, and he pleaded guilty to an amended charge of drug paraphernalia.

His plea deal gave him a suspended six-month sen-

tence and 12 months probation that ran concurrently with his suspended sentence and probation from the marijuana charges. On Dec. 6, his probation had been revoked, and his sentence of six months in the parish jail was imposed.

On Dec. 30, however, "the court amended the defendant's previously imposed sentence to 24 days in parish jail with credit for time served since Dec. 6, 2010," meaning his sentence was essentially erased.

That allowed Chaisson, on that same day, to agree to another plea deal in which he pleaded guilty to one amended charge and the court dismissed nine other charges.

According to the documents of that deal, he pleaded guilty to attempted cocaine possession with intent to distribute, amended from the original charge of cocaine distribution, and was dismissed on four counts of cocaine possession, his third offense of marijuana possession, one count of possession of MDMA, two counts of resisting an officer and one count of simple criminal damage to property.

He received no jail time and five years of active supervised probation.

In the 3 1/2 years since, he has spent two days in jail for appearing in court not dressed in the proper attire

and 60 days for removing himself from a Baton Rouge recovery center (a sentence that was originally one year in jail but amended to 60 days after he was accepted into the Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office rehabilitation program).

The last time he was in jail was in November, when he was released from a two-day sentence for failing his third drug test and a 15-day sentence for failing his fourth drug test.

There was a bench warrant for his arrest in March for missing drug court, which pushed the district court to issue a statewide warrant calling for his immediate arrest May 13.

Costs

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employment in a timely fashion and without the need for further action by the Board," the resolution reads.

During Thursday's special board meeting, Cooper asked about the cost. Board President Hunter Beasley quickly shut him down, saying the comments should be only about the resolution to accept charges against Cooper.

"You're voting on charges to dismiss me... This man has been working for a number of months. It has everything to do with these charges," Cooper said.

No financial figures were announced.