

Ex-Boulder City police chief pleads guilty in animal shelter scandal



Bill Conger, now the former chief of police administration for Boulder City, speaks during a Boulder City Council meeting at City Hall, Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2014. (K.M. Cannon/Las Vegas Review-Journal)

By BEN BOTKIN LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

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BOULDER CITY — [Former Boulder City Police Chief Bill Conger](#) pleaded guilty Tuesday to a misdemeanor charge tied to the city's animal shelter scandal.

As part of the agreement, he paid a \$1,000 fine.

Conger declined to talk with reporters after the hearing in Boulder Township Justice Court.

The Clark County district attorney's office charged Conger with the [misdemeanor crime of "failure to perform a duty"](#) in connection with dropping an animal cruelty case against former Animal Control Supervisor Mary Jo Frazier.

The complaint says Conger directed his officers not to submit a request to the district attorney's office for the prosecution of Frazier on "substantiated felony animal cruelty charges."

Gus Flangas, an attorney for Conger, spoke to reporters outside the courthouse after the plea.

"It's just an unfortunate set of circumstances that this all happened," he said. "Mr. Conger felt it would be in everybody's best interest to just make this plea and get this behind him."

He declined to answer questions.

In April 2015, a criminal investigation found Frazier, as the city's animal control supervisor, [had unnecessarily killed dozens of animals](#) housed in the shelter for years. City staff who worked with Frazier raised concerns with a police detective, who investigated the case and found many instances where Frazier euthanized animals before waiting for the shelter's five-day hold period to end. City staff told police that Frazier killed animals for fun.

Despite the detective's findings, [Conger let Frazier quietly retire](#) and dropped the case.

The city reopened the case in December 2015, following a public outcry after the Review-Journal reported about the quashed case.

Conger resigned after his staff reported to the city's human resources department that he lied about employees coming to him about Frazier. Frazier's attorney has said she is adamant about her innocence.

Testimony in Frazier's case reveals Conger preferred to see Frazier retire without facing charges.

City police Detective David Olson and Sgt. Aaron Johnson both testified Conger told them the criminal case against Frazier would be used as a "poker chip."

“We’re going to use this as a poker chip, kid, because I know about some of this stuff prior and it’s going to look bad if it gets out,” Olson said Conger told him. “So we’re going to let her bow out gracefully and retire and we’re not going to submit charges and we’re not going to arrest her.”

Conger told the Review-Journal in December that he felt felony charges had been an overreach and that Frazier retiring made the whole thing moot.

“People get in trouble and resign all the time,” Conger said then.

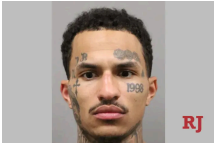
Former Police Chief Tom Finn, Conger’s predecessor, was present on Tuesday. Finn had obtained public records about the Frazier case after Conger shut it down and played a role in getting it out in the open.

He said the guilty plea is a black eye for Conger.

“How many times have you seen a head of a police department charged for not doing their job?” Finn said.

Contact Ben Botkin at bbotkin@reviewjournal.com or 702-387-2904. Find [@BenBotkin1](https://twitter.com/BenBotkin1) on Twitter.

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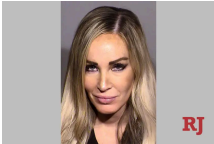
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