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Former Charlestown cop arraigned on steroid-trafficking, money-laundering charges

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PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Former Charlestown police officer Evan Speck appeared in federal court Friday on steroid trafficking and money laundering charges.

Speck, 34, of Westerly, indicated in a plea agreement signed last week that he intends to plead guilty to three felony charges: possession with intent to distribute anabolic steroids; distribution of misbranded drugs into interstate commerce from 2015 through March; and money laundering.

U.S. District Magistrate Judge Lincoln Almond, however, entered not guilty pleas on Speck's behalf to move the case through the court system. Speck is expected to plead guilty to the charges at a hearing in the near future before U.S. District Court Chief Judge William E. Smith.

Almond released Speck on a $10,000 unsecured bond, deeming him not to be a flight risk. He is allowed to travel in Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut.

In addition, Almond ordered Speck to seek mental-health treatment and submit to periodic substance-abuse testing. He will forfeit the three firearms and $17,954 that were seized in March, and will forfeit another $536,000, based on the drug-trafficking business he was running.

Wearing a gray suit and blue collared shirt and flanked by his lawyers, Edward C. Roy and Melissa Larsen, Speck responded politely to Almond's questioning.

"He's very remorseful for what has happened," Roy said after the hearing. His client had to take the best possible route, which was to take responsibility for his actions, Roy said. "He's a very good law-enforcement officer," he added.

Speck stepped down from the Charlestown police in March after 11 years on the force following the raid of his Bradford home.

A bodybuilder who has competed nationally, Speck twice sued the town, Chief Jeffrey Allen, the Police Department and Lt. Michael Paliotta, alleging that he was discriminated and retaliated against after requesting accommodations for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

He said he has developed post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of the subsequent workplace stress. He claimed, too, that the town and his superiors have halted his pay and health-care coverage and denied him injured-on-duty status in retaliation for

exercising his rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act. ADHD and PTSD are classified as disabilities under federal law.

The town, in court papers, countered that Speck was absent from work for months "claiming it is due to his alleged disability," but managed during that time to participate in bodybuilding competitions in Florida, Connecticut and Las Vegas.

It notes that he has purchased a BMW, renovated his home with custom-made materials and traveled to New York for bodybuilding treatment — all since the start of his first sick leave in January 2016. The town asserts that it moved to rescind Speck's pay and benefits only after he had exhausted all paid leave, and not in retaliation.

Roy said Friday that the status of those lawsuits remain "up in the air" and under discussion.

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