

CHARGES DROPPED AGAINST FORMER MARATHON FIRE CHIEF

State dismisses traffic ticket,
hit-and-run misdemeanor

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A criminal charge and traffic citation from a highway crash that led to the termination of former Marathon Fire Chief James Muro were both dismissed last week, according to Monroe County court records.

The initial charges stemmed from a four-car crash in Islamorada on April 8, after which a Marathon press release stated Muro had been “allegedly cited for leaving the scene of a crash without giving information and careless driving while operating a city vehicle after working hours.”

A traffic infraction for careless driving, filed by the Florida Highway Patrol on April 23, was dismissed on June 17. A criminal citation, alleging the misdemeanor hit-and-run with \$39,000 in property damage, was shown to city officials, but did not enter Monroe County court records until May 11 – roughly two weeks after an email from Florida Highway Patrol stated the citation had already been voided. On June 9, the State Attorney’s Office dismissed the case, citing insufficient evidence.

“I am glad this matter is resolved fairly and quickly – this confirms that I have been consistent in my reporting of the facts of this unfortunate event,” Muro said in a statement to the Weekly. “Body and dash cam footage clearly showed me first on scene, assisting patients and directing incoming units to assist. I do wish that this exculpatory evidence had been reviewed prior to any ticket being issued and by the city before making any public statements or decision.”

Muro’s termination letter cited alleged policy violations



Former Marathon Fire Chief James Muro. ALEX RICKERT/Keys Weekly

related to the incident, including reporting and post-accident testing procedures, several of which Muro has maintained were not in true effect at the time of the crash.

Body camera footage reviewed by the Keys Weekly showed Muro at the scene reporting the crash and assisting victims in the immediate aftermath of the wreck. Shortly after deputies and fire rescue personnel arrived, he told a deputy “I’ll get out of your hair – stay or go?”

“You’re good,” the deputy responded, after which Muro left in his city-provided fire rescue truck.

Later in the same video, victims in the crash alleged that a last-minute swerve by Muro to avoid a stationary car played a significant role in the accident, resulting in a head-on collision between two SUVs that totaled both vehicles.

City officials did not respond to a request for comment on the dismissed charges by press time.