

# Suspended Levesque to step down as OACP vice-president

Police chief steps aside as first vice-president of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police while under suspension and facing criminal charges.

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THUNDER BAY -- The case of suspended Thunder Bay Police Chief J.P. Levesque has a new twist. Officials with the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police say Levesque has informed them he will step aside from his position

as first vice-president of their group.

The OACP executive held their board meeting in Thunder Bay last year, with Levesque acting as the host.

The president of the Police Chiefs Association received notice from Levesque on Tuesday that he was vacating his position. the same day the OPP announced criminal charges against him for breach of trust and obstruction of justice.

On Thursday the Thunder Bay Police Services Board announced it was suspending Levesque, with pay, while he deals with the charges.

Ironically the OACP has been lobbying for changes to the Police Act for many years, to force some officers to be suspended without pay.

Levesque himself spoke about the issue in 2015.

“We have a responsibility to the community and to the taxpayers,” Levesque said.

“If we see something that is egregious, whether it be misconduct or criminal activity, that an officer commits that we should have the ability to say, you know, first off I think it’s going to help expedite things to saying you’re no longer paid.”

Ontario is the only province where police officers' pay can't be docked while they are under suspension.

Levesque received a salary of \$247,000 in 2016.

His first court date is June 13, though his case could take several years to be resolved.

The OACP says the province is tabling a revised Police Act in the fall, which is expected to give police chiefs and police boards the ability to suspend officers without pay in certain circumstances.