

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Man Who Reportedly Swung Fist at One Officer, Headbutted Another, Is Now Facing Multiple Felonies

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The V.I. Police Department has not provided a mugshot of the suspect. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

ST. THOMAS — A man accused of headbutting a police officer at the Lindbergh Bay Beach now faces felony charges before the V.I. Superior Court.

About 8:30 p.m. on August 8, a woman called for help because her husband, Tony Hernandez, was in distress. Police were dispatched to Lindbergh Bay Beach, near Splash Zone, where they found Hernandez lying face down in the water with his wife trying to hold him up out of harm's way.

One of the officers waded in to help the woman getting her spouse out of the water, while another provided assistance from near the rocks. After getting Hernandez away from danger, the officers noticed that he was unable to stand, and also took note of the strong odor of alcohol coming from his person.

The woman told police that she wanted to go home, and police offered to provide an escort to her husband. She reportedly told them that she was concerned that he would “do something stupid” on the way home, and thus they decided to handcuff Hernandez during the ride. He agreed at first, and was duly handcuffed, but then began to complain that the cuffs were too tight. One of the officers went to adjust the handcuffs, but the right cuff opened completely and Hernandez reportedly used the opportunity to pull away and lash out, catching the other officer in his right eye.

Hernandez then reportedly headbutted the officer that had loosened his cuffs, breaking his glasses, and then spat in his face. The two officers wrestled him to the ground and placed him under arrest. The handcuffs were once again secured around his wrists, and Hernandez was taken to the Schneider Regional Medical Hospital. While being taken to hospital, Hernandez reportedly began hitting his head against the bars on the windows of the police vehicle, and screaming homophobic obscenities.

After being seen by a doctor and treated for his injuries, Hernandez was charged with aggravated assault and battery, interfering with an officer discharging his duty, throwing bodily fluid or waste at a person, and destruction of property. He was remanded to the Bureau of Corrections where he remained until his advice of rights hearing on August 11.

In court on Friday, magistrate Simone VanHolten-Turnbull found probable cause to uphold all the charges against Tony Hernandez, and set bail at \$1000, which has been posted. Now free ahead of trial, Hernandez is restricted to the St. Thomas/St. John district unless he obtains written permission from the court to travel. He must report to the probation office every week by telephone, and he must not discuss the pending legal matter with his wife.

His next court appearance is scheduled for August 25.