

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
401 Market Street, Fourth Floor
Camden, New Jersey 08101



Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

More Information? Contact the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

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Assistant U.S. Attorneys
CHRISTOPHER J. GRAMICCIONI
973-297-2067
JENNY R KRAMER
973-645-2793

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Former Pleasantville Board of Education Member Sentenced to
42 Months in Prison for Conviction on Corruption Charges

(More)

Greg Reinert, PAO
Public Affairs Office

856-757-5233
973-645-2888

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CAMDEN – Former Pleasantville Board of Education member James T. McCormick was sentenced to 42 months in federal prison today for accepting two bribes totaling \$4,500 from an insurance brokerage in return for his official assistance in steering public contracts to the company, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Jerome B. Simandle also ordered McCormick, 50, to pay a \$7,500 fine and to serve three years of supervised release upon the completion of his prison term.

On Feb. 27, 2008, after seven hours of deliberations, a jury convicted McCormick of all six counts contained in a federal Indictment that was returned on Nov. 28, 2007. McCormick was convicted of one count each of conspiracy, attempted extortion, bribery, violation of the federal Travel Act and two counts of money laundering.

“McCormick is going to jail for his crimes against the residents of Pleasantville,” said Christie. “We are gratified with the results of this investigation and once again hope that a clear message has been sent to those in public life, that if you corrupt your office you will be brought to justice.”

McCormick was among 11 public officials and one private individual arrested in September 2007 as part of a wide-ranging public corruption investigation by the FBI and U.S. Attorney’s Office.

In convicting McCormick, the jury found that he participated with other Board of Education members and others in a scheme to agree to accept and actually accept corrupt cash payments in exchange for his and others’ official assistance in obtaining contracts for an insurance brokerage company. McCormick then attempted to hide the corrupt proceeds by having the money wired to an account of another person who lived outside of New Jersey.

During the trial, the jury heard the testimony of five government witnesses, which included former Pleasantville Board of Education President Jayson Adams and former members James Pressley and Maurice “Pete” Callaway, who have all pleaded guilty for their roles in the scheme. The jury also viewed hundreds of pieces of evidence and heard secretly recorded conversations pertaining to McCormick’s scheme to trade official action for bribes.

In convicting McCormick of conspiracy, attempted extortion and bribery, the jury found that McCormick conspired with four other members of the Pleasantville Board of Education to vote to cancel an existing insurance brokerage contract and to award the contract to another company in exchange for corrupt payments to be made to each of the five board members.

In convicting McCormick of charges of violation of the federal Travel Act and money-laundering, the jury found that in late September 2006 McCormick arranged to have

