

NEWS

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Former Marlboro Township Mayor Matthew Scannapieco
Sentenced to 21 Months in Prison for Taking \$245,000 in Bribes

– Judge Also Fines Scannapieco \$100,000 –

(More)

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CAMDEN – Matthew V. Scannapieco, who served as Marlboro Township mayor from 1992 to 2003, was sentenced today to 21 months in federal prison for accepting bribes totaling approximately \$245,000 from developer Anthony Spalliero, and to tax evasion, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge Jerome B. Simandle also fined Scannapieco \$100,000. Simandle ordered Scannapieco to surrender to the federal Bureau of Prisons by Aug. 4 to begin serving his sentence. There is no parole in the federal system.

Scannapieco, 56, pleaded guilty April 12, 2005, to a two-count Information charging him with accepting corrupt payments and tax evasion. Scannapieco admitted that on numerous occasions from 1997 to 2003, he accepted cash payments from a developer – who was not identified in court at that time – for supporting the developer’s projects as the mayor and a voting member of the Marlboro Township Planning Board.

Spalliero was subsequently indicted and pleaded guilty to bribery and tax evasion in December. Spalliero then admitted paying bribes to Scannapieco in exchange for Scannapieco’s official assistance. Spalliero awaits sentencing in September.

At the sentencing hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael A. Hammer said the government supported a sentence below the range recommended under the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines because of Scannapieco’s assistance in the investigation of others involved in corruption in Marlboro Township. Scannapieco’s assistance led to investigations and guilty pleas from Spalliero and Monmouth County developers Bernard and Steven Meiterman.

At his plea hearing, Scannapieco admitted receiving the following corrupt payments in exchange for his official action:

- \$25,000 in 1997, in exchange for supporting the Spalliero’s project on Texas Road;
- \$60,000 in 1997 and 1998, in exchange for supporting the rezoning of property south of Woodcliff Boulevard.
- \$25,000 in 1999, for working to settle a dispute between Spalliero and Marlboro Township regarding the developer’s rights on Dutch Lane, Vanderburg Road, and Pleasant Valley Road.
- \$100,000 in 2001 and 2002, for supporting rezoning property located on and around the former Marlboro Airport site.
- \$10,000 in 2001 or 2002, for persuading an elected state official to assist the developer

in procuring an easement across a railroad line near Dutch Lane and Buckley Road.

- \$25,000 in 2002 and 2003, for supporting approvals to construct a large retail store on Routes 9 and 520.

In pleading guilty to tax evasion, Scannapieco admitted that he did not report to the IRS any of the bribe payments he received from the developer. A certified public accountant and certified financial auditor, Scannapieco also admitted that he regularly purchased cashier's checks and postal money orders – in structured amounts and with cash to avoid federal cash-transaction reports – and used the cashier's checks and money orders for personal expenses.

In imposing sentence, Judge Simandle took into consideration Scannapieco's cooperation and consulted the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense and other factors. The judge, however, was not bound by the advisory guidelines and exercised his discretion in determining the sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited the IRS Criminal Investigation section, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge William P. Offord, and Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun, for their work on the Marlboro Township investigation.

The government was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael A. Hammer.

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Defense Counsel: Mitchell Ansell, Esq. Ocean Township